

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

INTRODUCTION & COURSE OVERVIEW

You are all welcome to the modular programme of the School of Ministry and we trust that you will be equipped by the Holy Spirit for effective and faithful service to the Lord through this programme.

Each module is planned for 4 months, after which a second module may be introduced in future for those interested in further study.

SUBJECTS:

Subjects to be taught will include the following:

1. Principles of Christian Leadership
2. Basic Christian Doctrine
3. Spiritual Gifts
4. Prayer & Intercession
5. Christian Character
6. Evangelism & Christian Discipleship
7. Bible Survey (Old & New Testament Survey)
8. Bible Study Methods

MOTTO:

To promote and to preserve the integrity of God's Word
2Timothy 1:13; 2:1-2, 15; 3:14-17

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Bring a pen, notebook, Bible, a folder, and a study bag
2. Invest in a good reference or Study Bible
3. Invest in a good Bible concordance, if available
4. Make efforts to memorise Scripture (*Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1:1-3; 119:11*)
5. Make time to study God's Word regularly and take notes of the lessons learnt (*2Timothy 2:15*)
6. Spend time to pray for divine wisdom and understanding of God's Word (*Psalms 119:130*)
7. Make time to pray for the teachers and interpreter for wisdom, understanding and anointing (*Ephesians 6:18-20; Hebrews 13:17*)
8. Make every effort to attend lectures regularly and on time too. If you are unable to do this for whatever reason, please show courtesy by contacting the Registrar, Assistant Registrar, Coordinator or the General Administrator of your Region.
9. If you have any questions during the course of the lectures, please write them down on a paper or raise your hand for attention.
10. Show respect to the teacher and to your colleagues whenever making contributions to the lessons, even when you have to disagree with their views.
11. Don't be critical or irritable by other people's views or opinions. We are here to learn together.

12. When Bible references are given to be read, every student is given an opportunity to read in class as part of the learning process.

OUR OBJECTIVE:

We will seek, through the studies, to provide a correct interpretation and application of the Holy Scriptures as it relates to 4 main areas:

1. Our personal character – if the word does not change you, you have no testimony of the power of God that is in His word
2. Our relationship with God
3. Our relationship with fellow men and women
4. Our service to God and to His Church

In seeking to achieve these objectives, our aim is

1. To complement what the churches and other Bible Schools are providing to their members and students
2. To provide short-term training to leaders and believers who want to go deeper in their walk with God
3. Not to provide an academic programme in the interim but practical training and teaching of the Bible and of the Christian faith
4. To complement the core subjects from time to time with seminars and workshops on contemporary issues affecting the Church and society.

WHY WAS THE HOLY SCRIPTURES WRITTEN?

The Bible (originally from the word *Bibleo* – meaning many books) is the name given to the revelation of God to man contained in sixty-six (66) books or pamphlets, bound together and forming one book and only one, for it has in reality one author (God) and one purpose and plan, and is the development of one scheme of the redemption of man. The compilation of these sixty-six (66) books or pamphlets into one book was completed in 397 AD.

From time to time, you hear one say that they don't believe totally in what's written in the Holy Bible because it was written by men and has been edited. Although it's true that it was written by many different authors, God always was in charge of what was written (*2Peter 1:20-21*). What God wanted written was written, and what He didn't want written, wasn't.

Jesus Christ began His public ministry by reading from Scripture (*Luke 4:14-21*). In fact, He quoted from them quite often (*Luke 24:44-45*). If He didn't believe in what's written in Scripture, would He have used it as the source of much of what He spoke about? Of course not! Since Jesus believed in Scripture, shouldn't we? Of course we should!

2Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." A key word in this verse is 'All'. All means all, not some.

From time to time, we will ask students to volunteer to read the Scriptures whenever a reference is given during lessons.

The Holy Bible was written for the following reasons:

1. 2Timothy 3:16-17 – For teaching (doctrine), rebuking, correction, & training in righteousness
2. Deuteronomy 5:1, 22 – To provide a revelation of God’s divine will and character, and the basis for fruitful and blessed relationship with Him (*Exodus 31:18*)
3. 2Timothy 3:16-17 – For the equipping of believers for works of service
4. Romans 15:4 – For our learning, encouragement, patience and hope in the promises of God
5. 1Corinthians 10:6-12 – To learn lessons and avoid the consequences of wrong choices and sinful behaviour
6. Luke 1:1-4 – To provide an assurance of the truth of God’s eternal purposes and plans for the human race
7. John 20:30-31 – To provide a basis for our faith in Christ (*John 19:35; 21:24-25*)
8. Revelations 1:19 – Messages and prophetic words as given by the Lord were intended not only for the benefit of the people at the time of writing but also for the future believers.

Since God inspired all the writings of Scriptures, no-one can take it upon themselves to provide interpretations of their own except as led or revealed to them by the Holy Spirit (*2Peter 1:20-21; John 14:25-26; 16:13-15; 1Corinthians 2:1-16; Revelations 22:18-19*).

Books of the bible and the writers or authors

Book	Author / Writer
1) Genesis	Moses
2) Exodus	Moses
3) Leviticus	Moses
4) Numbers	Moses
5) Deuteronomy	Moses
6) Joshua	Joshua
7) Judges	Samuel
8) Ruth	Samuel
9) 1 Samuel	Samuel; Gad; Nathan
10) 2 Samuel	Gad; Nathan
11) 1 Kings	Jeremiah
12) 2 Kings	Jeremiah
13) 1 Chronicles	Ezra
14) 2 Chronicles	Ezra
15) Ezra	Ezra
16) Nehemiah	Nehemiah
17) Esther	Mordecai
18) Job	Moses
19) Psalm	David & others
20) Proverbs	Solomon; Agur; Lemuel
21) Ecclesiastes	Solomon
22) Songs of Solomon	Solomon
23) Isaiah	Isaiah
24) Jeremiah	Jeremiah
25) Lamentations	Jeremiah
26) Ezekiel	Ezekiel
27) Daniel	Daniel
28) Hosea	Hosea
29) Joel	Joel
30) Amos	Amos
31) Obadiah	Obadiah
32) Jonah	Jonah
33) Micah	Micah
34) Nahum	Nahum
35) Habakkuk	Habakkuk
36) Zephaniah	Zephaniah
37) Haggai	Haggai
38) Zechariah	Zechariah
39) Malachi	Malachi
40) Matthew	Matthew
41) Mark	Mark
42) Luke	Luke
43) John	John
44) Acts	Luke
45) Romans	Paul
46) 1 Corinthians	Paul

47) 2 Corinthians	Paul
48) Galatians	Paul
49) Ephesians	Paul
50) Philippians	Paul
51) Colossians	Paul
52) 1 Thessalonians	Paul
53) 2 Thessalonians	Paul
54) 1 Timothy	Paul
55) 2 Timothy	Paul
56) Titus	Paul
57) Philemon	Paul
58) Hebrews	Unknown
59) James	James (Jesus' half-brother)
60) 1 Peter	Peter
61) 2 Peter	Peter
62) 1 John	Apostle John
63) 2 John	John
64) 3 John	John
65) Jude	Jude (Jesus' half-brother)
66) Revelation	John

BIBLE STATISTICS

Amazing Bible Facts & Statistics



Number of Books in the Bible: 66



Chapters: 1,189



Verses: 31,101



Words: 783,137



Letters: 3,566,480





Number of Promises given in the Bible: 1,260





Commands: 6,468







Predictions: over 8,000



  Fulfilled Prophecy: 3,268 verses



  Unfulfilled Prophecy: 3,140



  Number of Questions: 3,294



  Longest Name:
Mahershalalhashbaz (Isaiah 8:1)



  Longest Verse: Esther 8:9 (78 words)



  Shortest Verse: John 11:35 (2 words: "Jesus wept")



  Middle Books: Micah and Nahum



  Middle Chapter: Psalm 117



  Shortest Chapter (by number of words): Psalm 117 (by number of words)



  Longest Book: Psalms (150 Chapters)



  Shortest Book (by number of words): 3 John

  Longest Chapter: Psalm 119 (176 verses)



  Number of times the word "God" appears: 3,358

  Number of times the word "Lord" appears: 7,736

  Number of different authors: 40



  Number of languages the Bible has been translated into: over 1,200

OLD TESTAMENT STATISTICS:


  Number of Books: 39



  Chapters: 929



  Verses: 23,114

  Words: 602,585

  Letters: 2,278,100



  Middle Book: Proverbs



  Middle Chapter: Job 20

  Middle Verses: 2 Chronicles 20:17-18

  Smallest Book: Obadiah

  Shortest Verse: 1 Chronicles 1:25

  Longest Verse: Esther 8:9 (78 words)

  Longest Chapter: Psalms 119

NEW TESTAMENT STATISTICS:



■ Number of Books: 27



■ Number of Chapters: 260



■ Number of Verses: 7,957



■ Words: 180,552



■ Letters: 838,380



■ Middle Book: 2 Thessalonians



■ Middle Chapters: Romans 8, 9



■ Middle Verse: Acts 27:17



■ Smallest Book: 3 John



■ Shortest Verse: John 11:35



■ Longest Verse: Revelation 20:4
(68 words)



■ Longest Chapter: Luke 1

There are 8,674 different Hebrew words in the Bible, 5,624 different Greek words, and 12,143 different English words in the King James Version.

- Bible Written by approximately 40 Authors
- Written over a period of 1,600 years
- Written over 40 generations
- Written in three languages: Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic
- Written on three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa

- Written in different locations: wilderness, dungeon, palace, prison, in exile, at home
- Written by men from all occupations: kings, peasants, doctors, fishermen, tax collectors, scholars, etc.
- Written in different times: war, peace, poverty, prosperity, freedom and slavery
- Written in different moods: heights of joy to the depths of despair
- Written in harmonious agreement on a widely diverse range of subjects and doctrines.

10 Longest Books in the Bible

- 1) Psalm - 150 Chapters, 2,461 verses, 43,743 words
- 2) Jeremiah - 52 chapters, 1,364 verses, 42,659 words
- 3) Ezekiel - 48 chapters, 1,273 verses, 39,407 words
- 4) Genesis - 50 chapters, 1,533 verses, 38,267 words
- 5) Isaiah - 66 chapters, 1,292 verses, 37,044 words
- 6) Numbers - 36 chapters, 1,288 verses, 32,902 words
- 7) Exodus - 40 chapters, 1,213 verses, 32,602 words
- 8) Deuteronomy - 34 chapters, 959 verses, 28,461 words
- 9) 2 Chronicles - 36 chapters, 822 verses, 26,074 words
- 10) Luke - 24 chapters, 1,151 verses, 25,944 words

10 Shortest Books in the Bible

- 1) 3 John - 1 chapter, 14 verses, 299 words
- 2) 2 John - 1 chapter, 13 verses, 303 words
- 3) Philemon - 1 chapter, 25 verses, 445 words
- 4) Jude - 1 chapter, 25 verses, 613 words
- 5) Obadiah - 1 chapter, 21 verses, 670 words
- 6) Titus - 3 chapters, 46 verses, 921 words

- 7) 2 Thessalonians - 3 chapters, 47 verses, 1,042 words
- 8) Haggai - 2 chapters, 38 verses, 1,131 words
- 9) Nahum - 3 chapters, 47 verses, 1,285 words
- 10) Jonah - 4 chapters, 48 verses, 1,321.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
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SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 1: THE SOVEREIGN GOD & HIS NATURAL QUALITIES

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction:-

This course is an introductory systematic study of basic Bible doctrine and its application in the life of the believer. Major topics include the nature of God, the acts of God, the activities and limitations of angels, the creation, and the fall of man, God's redemptive plan, the origin of the scriptures, the church, and God's ultimate plan for mankind.

What is doctrine?

It is an accepted body of beliefs or teachings of the Church as based on the Holy Bible (*2Timothy 3:10, 16; John 7:15-17*). The doctrine of the Church is one and this is why it is written in singular form and not plural.

There are several other doctrines not accepted by the Church but peddled by false teachers, false prophets, sects and cults. The Early Church apostles warned against these doctrines (*2Timothy 4:3-4; Colossians 2:20-23; 1Timothy 4:1-2; Hebrews 13:9; Ephesians 4:14*).

1.0 - The Sovereign God

1.1 - God: His Nature & Natural Characteristics

In our efforts to understand God, the finite man cannot comprehend the Infinite God (*Job 11:7*).

We can only have some knowledge of God as He reveals Himself in His nature and characteristics (*Romans 1:20; Deuteronomy 29:29*).

What He has revealed of Himself is an accurate but partial disclosure of His divine Being (*1Corinthians 13:12*).

We also know God as He enters into relationships with us.

The progressive self-revelation of God through the ages reaches its fullness in His Son, Jesus Christ (*Hebrews 1:2*).

1.1.1 - God's Nature

(a) God is a Personal Being

A person is something other than a body.

A person is one who has the capacity to think, to feel and to decide.

Although God has no body, He certainly has intelligence and the ability to think, feel and reason.

God communicates with people (*Psalms 25:14*).

He is affected by their response to Him (*Isaiah 1:14*)

He thinks (*Isaiah 55:8*)

He makes decisions (*Genesis 2:18*)

Therefore, God is a personal Being.

(b) God is Spirit

God has no form whatsoever because He is Spirit (*John 4:24*)

A spirit is invisible (*John 1:18*)

The quality of God as a Spirit may be defined as follows:-

(i) God has a unique, substantial being which is distinct from the world (*Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15-17*). His attributes, which make up His nature are the basis of all His outward manifestations.

(ii) God is invisible, immaterial and is composed of no parts (*1Timothy 1:17*). He is not a natural substance as we are, but a spiritual substance (*Luke 24:39; 1Timothy 6:15-16*). Since God is a spirit in the purest sense of the word, He does not have the limitations of a human being.

In Exodus 33:19-23, it is said that Moses saw God. What he saw was the reflections of God's glory and not His essence.

God can also reveal Himself through a physical manifestation (*John 1:32-34*)

The Bible also speaks of God's hands, feet, ear, mouth, nose or face. This actually indicates that God is doing something a human being would do. (*Psalms 98; 99:5; 91:4; 34:15*).

These figurative language or symbols help us in understanding the unknown from the known.

(c) God is One

When we say that God is One, we are referring to

- (i) the numerical unity of God
- (ii) the uniqueness of God
- (iii) the simplicity of God

(i) The Numerical unity of God

There is only One Divine Being (*1Corinthians 8:6; 1Kings 8:60; Deuteronomy 4:35, 39*)

This should not be confused with the Trinity, which would be treated later.

(ii) The Uniqueness of God

God is unique in that He is the only One (*Deuteronomy 6:4; Exodus 15:11*).

He is the only One to be called Jehovah (*Zechariah 14:9*)

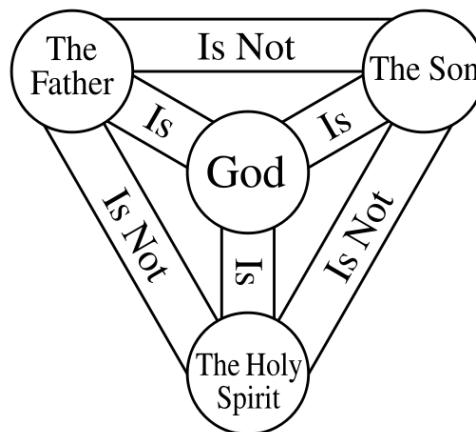
He is the Sovereign ruler of the universe, and besides Him there is no other God.

Other passages are *Genesis 17:1; Exodus 20:2-3, 23; Isaiah 43:10-11; 44:6, 8; 45:5*,

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God is self-existent, which means that eternal existence is part of His very nature. He has no beginning and no end.

(d) God is Triune



(Further Readings: *Matthew 28:18-19; 3:16-17; Luke 3:22; Mark 1:10-11; Acts 7:55; 2Corinthians 13:14; Deuteronomy 6:4*)

God is Spirit, is personal, is one, and is triune.

The words triune and trinity contain the concepts of oneness or three-in-one.

The one Divine Being is tri-personal or a Trinity.

In Him, there are three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It is difficult to describe the Trinity.

Each person in the Trinity is known by different qualities, which are distinctive.

These personal properties or qualities express the relationship of each to the others.

Each in Himself expresses the Divine essence.

There are three persons in the Godhead:- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

They are of the same substance:- equal in glory, power, majesty and eternity; and they are one.

While distinct in their relations with one another, they are one in all else. The whole work of creation and grace is a single operation common to all three divine persons, who at the same time operate according to their unique properties, so that all things are from the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit.

The word 'Trinity' is not found in the Bible, but the doctrine of Trinity is revealed in both the Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament, one of the names of God Elohim, is in plural form e.g. *Genesis 1:26; Psalms 45:6-7, Hebrews 1:8-9; Isaiah 48:16; 63:8-10.*

This points to personal distinctions in God, and to a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

In the New Testament,

- (i) God sent His Son into the world (*John 3:16; Galatians 4:4; 1John 4:9*)
- (ii) The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit (*John 14:26, 15:26; 16:7*)
- (iii) The Father speaks to the Son (*Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22*)
- (iv) The Son communes with the Father (*Matthew 11:25-26; John 11:41; 12:27-28*)
- (v) The Holy Spirit prays to God in the hearts of believers (*Romans 8:26-27*)
- (vi) At other occasions, all three persons are mentioned e.g. *Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 1Corinthians 12:4-6, 2Corinthians 13:14; 1Peter 1:2.*

It is difficult to understand the teaching of Trinity because in human experience nothing can be compared to 'trinity in unity' and 'unity in trinity'.

The mystery of the Trinity is difficult to comprehend in our finite or limited existence. We can only understand Trinity to the degree that God has revealed in His Word (1Corinthians 13:12).

(e) God is Eternal

God has no beginning and has always existed. That's why He is eternal.

The creation of heaven and earth was not the beginning of eternity neither was it when angels were created.

Eternity is an infinite (unlimited) timelessness. It is God's infinity in relation to time. Men and angels are created beings, but God alone is without beginning. Thus, He is the only inhabitant of eternity.

God is eternal in 2 ways:-

- (i) He never began to be; He always was (*Psalms 90:2*);
- (ii) His existence will never end (*Deuteronomy 32:40; Psalms 102:27*).

The eternity of God is revealed in scripture (*Genesis 21:33; Psalms 90:2; 102:27; Isaiah 57:15; 1Timothy 6:16*).

(f) God is Immutable (Unchanging)

Human beings have faults that need to be changed or corrected, but God does not. He is perfect in every respect (*Isaiah 46:9-10; Psalms 33:11; 119:160; 103:17; Malachi 3:6*).

Certain principles about the unchanging nature of God are:-

- (i) Since God is infinite, self-existent and independent, He is above all the causes and possibilities of change;
- (ii) God can neither increase nor decrease and He is not subject to further development;
- (iii) God's power can never become greater or less, and He can never be wiser or holier;
- (iv) God cannot be more righteous, merciful, and loving than He has ever been or ever will be;
- (v) He cannot change in His relation to people. He operates according to eternal principles that do not vary with the change of day.

Since God is unchangeable, we can commit ourselves completely to Him as we rely on His word (*Romans 8:28*).

God does change His mind over sin (see *1Samuel 15:11, 29; Numbers 23:19; Jonah 3:9-10*). This attitude of God does not refer to any fundamental change in His character or purpose. He always hates sin and always loves the sinner.

1.1.2. - God's Natural Attributes

(Further Readings: *Job 38 – 41; Psalms 139; 145:3; Romans 11:33-35*)

We have studied God's nature but we need to know also His characteristics, which are His attributes.

God's attributes are the qualities which are associated with or which describe Him.

His attributes explain why He acts as He does.

His attributes include omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience and wisdom.

(a) The Omnipotence of God

His omnipotence implies that God is almighty or all-powerful (*Jeremiah 32:17, 27*)

This absolute power can be seen in creation (*Genesis 1:1*); sustaining all things by His powerful word (*Hebrews 1:3*); the redemption of people (*Luke 1:35, 37*); miracles (*Luke 9:43*); the salvation of sinners (*1Corinthians 2:5; 2Corinthians 4:7*); and the completion of His purpose for His kingdom (*1Peter 1:5*).

(b) The Omnipresence of God

God is everywhere present at all times (*Psalms 139:1-10*)

The knowledge that God is always present helps us to have courage in trials because we know that God is there to strengthen and guide us.

It also serves to remind us to be very careful in how we live because God sees everything that we do, whether good or bad.

Regardless of how we feel, God is with us.

Whether we can feel God's presence or not He is everywhere.

(c) The Omniscience of God

God knows and sees everything (*Psalms 139:11-12*).

He has unlimited awareness.

He knows all that is actual and all that is possible.

Because God knows all things, He is able to tell ahead of time what is going to happen in the future, as in prophetic predictions (*Isaiah 46:9-10*).

This does not mean that God makes the decisions about what is going to happen to us. He simply knows what our decisions will be before we make them.

Since He foresees, He can foretell. This does not mean He predetermined, or decided in advance what would take place.

The fact that God knows all things should strengthen our faith when we are in the middle of severe trial. He knows the cause of our problems and what would happen with each of the solutions we might consider.

(d) The wisdom of God - (He is All-Wise)

(Further Readings: *Isaiah 40:13-14; Romans 11:33-35*)

Wisdom is not the same as knowledge.

Wisdom searches through knowledge to find the highest purpose possible and then uses the best way to accomplish it.

Since God is all-wise, He does all things well.

God's wisdom can be seen through His creation (*Psalms 104:24-30; Jeremiah 10:12*)

His wisdom is available to us when we need it (*James 1:5*).

1.2 - God: His moral characteristics and works

1.2.1 - God's Moral characteristics

God's moral characteristics are those that are revealed in God's dealings with men and women.

They include the holiness of God and the love of God.

(a) The Holiness of God

God has always wanted to be known among the nations as the 'Holy One' (Ezekiel 39:7)

Because of God's holiness, it is impossible for Him to make moral mistakes.

Holiness is a characteristic of God which expresses the perfection of all He is, and the basis for all His actions.

Holiness contains the idea of separation. The perfect Divine Being is separated from and exalted above sinful people and evil.

Even though God is holy, He still maintains a close relationship with us.

Included in God's holiness is love for what is good and hatred of what is evil.

God's separation from people is because of human sinfulness (Exodus 19:12-13, 21-25)

His separation from the people is also symbolized by the building of the Tent, or Tabernacle in the desert, and enclosing the most Holy Place with curtains (Exodus 26:33).

Only a sanctified High Priest is allowed into the Most Holy Place once a year to sprinkle blood in the mercy seat, to make atonement for the sins of the people (Leviticus 16).

This exclusion of God from people was to emphasize to people how much God hates sin.

Sin separates God from sinful people, and sinful people from God. (Isaiah 59:2; Habakkuk 1:13; Job 40:3-5; Isaiah 6:5-7).

We have no direct access to God by our own efforts except by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2: 13-18; 1Peter 3:18)

God's righteousness and justice is a direct result of His holiness.

His holiness is expressed by righteousness and by justice.

God's righteousness is demonstrated by His love of holiness in people. As a holy God, He requires that His people be holy (Hebrews 12:10, 14; Ephesians 1:4; 1Peter 1:13-16)

His justice is demonstrated by His judgement of sin. He cannot tolerate sin and thus punishes those who sin.

Holiness as a quality of the Christian life is more than not doing what is wrong but also doing what is right (Luke 10:29-37)

(b) The Love of God

God shows His love to us not only in words and promises but also by what He does. There is nothing we can do or say to merit His love. It is part of His nature to love.

His love for us can be demonstrated in practical ways such as His goodness, mercy, patience, faithfulness etc. (John 3:16; 17:24; 1John 4:4-10; Revelations 1:4-5)

God loves people so much that at times He holds back punishment even when He had planned to punish. This is an aspect of His mercy (Ezekiel 22:30)

God's love is demonstrated in the sense that He is a merciful Father (Psalms 103:13-14; Isaiah 63:16; 64:8; Jeremiah 31:7-9)

God provided our salvation at immeasurable cost, that is the death of Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17).

His love delivers us from fear and its torments (1John 4:18; 2Timothy 1:17).

God's love can be demonstrated in His judgement of sin by hardships in order to get our attention and restore us back to fellowship with Him (Ezekiel 18:1-32).

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SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 2: JESUS CHRIST

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

2.1 - Jesus Christ: The visible expression of the Invisible God

Jesus came into the world to show us what God the Father is like.
He is the visible representation of the Father, who is invisible (*Hebrews 1:3*)
He embodies the natural and moral characteristics of God

2.1.1- The Humanity of Christ

The incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ refers to the union of deity with humanity in Jesus Christ.

He, the eternal Son of God, became man for the purpose of saving us (*Hebrews 9-18; Philippians 2:5-8; John 1:1-2, 14*).

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary (*Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:34-35; Galatians 4:4*).

In this unique, creative act, God broke through the chain of human generation and brought forth a supernatural Being.

With the incarnation, God set in motion His plan of redemption on earth.

Some of the evidences of Jesus' humanity include His human ancestry, human development, human appearance, human limitations, and human names.

(a) Human ancestry and development

Two gospel writers, Matthew and Luke, trace the human ancestry of Christ

Matthew traces His lineage all the way back to David and further to Abraham (*Matthew 1:1-17*)

Luke traces back to Adam, the first man (*Luke 3:23-38*)

The purpose of this ancestry was:

- (i) To prove that Jesus was from the line of David and therefore heir to the throne of Israel. Otherwise, no Jew would accept Him as his King or Messiah.
- (ii) To prove that Jesus, as the seed of Abraham, was the child of promise through whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed. (*Genesis 22:17-18*)

Though Jesus had a human ancestry, He did not have a natural human father. (*Luke 1:34-37*)

Jesus' birth was wonderfully miraculous, yet it was a human birth.

He developed physically and mentally according to the ordinary laws of human growth (*Matthew 13:55, Luke 2:40-41, Mark 1:35; John 4:32-34*)

(b) Human appearance and limitations

All evidence indicates Jesus' physical appearance was similar to that of other men. (*John 19:5, Philippians 2:8*)

When He took the form of man, He willingly subjected Himself to the limitations of humanity (*Philippians 2:5-8*).

Thus, he sometimes becomes physically tired (*John 4:6*), hungry (*Mark 11:12*) and thirsty (*John 19:28*).

He went through temptation (*Matthew 4:1-11*) and was strengthened by the Father when He prayed (*Luke 22:42-44*)

He also experienced pain (*1Peter 4:1*) and finally death (*1Corinthians 15:3; John 19:28-42*) which was the greatest proof of the limitation of His humanity.

(c) Human names

The names given to Jesus indicate His humanity.

He was named Jesus, a Greek form of the Old Testament name Joshua (*Matthew 1:21*) meaning 'Saviour'.

He was called the 'Son David' and 'the son of Abraham' (*Matthew 1:1*)

The 'Son of Man' mostly clearly represents His humanity (*Matthew 26:64-65*)

This term implies that He is truly human as well as being the representative of all mankind.

2.1.2 - The Deity of Christ

(a) Divine rights

Jesus Christ exercised divine rights that only God has.

The divine rights include (i) receiving the worship of men, (ii) forgiving sin, (iii) raising the dead, (iv) the right to judge.

(i) Jesus Christ received worship and it would have been blasphemy if he were not truly divine (Blasphemy is insulting God or claiming wrongly to be divine) - *Matthew 4:10; John 5:23; Matthew 2:11*.

Worship of any other god was forbidden by God (*Exodus 20:3-5*) and those who were not divine refused worship (*Acts 10:25-26; 14:11-18; Revelations 19:10; 22:8-9*)

(ii) Jesus exercised the right to forgive sin, a right reserved for God alone (*Mark 2:7; Matthew 9:2-6*)

(iii) He exercised the right of giving life (*John 5:21, 10:10*) or raising the dead (*Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56; John 11:1-44*)

Mere man cannot give life by his own power.

(iv) Jesus exercised His divine right to judge (*John 5:22; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2Corinthians 5:10*)

(b) Divine Character

(i) Moral attributes

- Jesus possessed the same moral and natural attributes as God the Father
- He was holy and could not be proved guilty of sin. (*1Peter 2:22; John 8:46*)
- He proved His love in relationships with people from all walks of life and all levels of society (*Luke 19:10; Matthew 11:19; Mark 10:17-22*)
- He prayed both for His followers and for His enemies too (*John 17:9, 20; Luke 23:34*) ; this is perfect example of love.
- He demonstrated His love by displaying genuine humanity and meekness, such as washing His disciples' feet (*John 13:14*) gentle with the sinful (*Luke 7:37-39, 44-50*), and with those who had forsaken Him (*Luke 22:61; John 21:15-23*)

(ii) Natural attributes

- Jesus Christ is Omnipotent. All angels, authorities, and powers of the universe are subject to His power and authority (*1Peter 3:22, Colossians 1:19; 2:9; 1Corinthians 1:24, Matthew 28:18*)
- Jesus is Omnipresent. He fills everything in every way (*Ephesians 1:22-23; Matthew 18:20*)
- Jesus is Omniscient. He knows everything (*John 2:24-25; 16:30; 21:17; Colossians 2:2-3*). He knew the sinful life of the Samaritan woman (*John 4*), the thoughts of the Pharisees (*Luke 6:8*) and the nature and end of the present age (*Matthew 24-25, Mark 13; Luke 21*).
There is no contradiction in the All-knowing character of Jesus in *Matthew 24:36* and *Mark 11:13* because in the flesh He chose to give up His right to the independent exercise of His divine characteristics (e.g. *Matthew 26:52-54; Philippians 2:5-7*)
- Jesus is the eternal Son of God (*John 1:1; Micah 5:2*)
- He has always existed, and will forever exist (*Hebrews 1:11-12; John 1:1-3*)
- He does not change (*Hebrews 13:8*)
- The above attributes are clear evidence of the deity of Jesus Christ

(c) Claims to Deity

Jesus made definite claims that He was God (*John 14:11*)

- (i) Oneness with the Father (*John 10:30*)
- (ii) Declared that He was the Son of God
- (iii) Asserted that salvation could be obtained only through Him (*John 10:9*)
- (iv) The only access to the Father (*John 14:6*)
- (v) Without Him, no-one can do anything (*John 15:5*)
- (vi) He testified to His existence (*John 8:58; 17:5*)
- (vii) Directed His disciples to pray in His name (*John 16:23*)
- (viii) Gave His disciples power to perform miracles (*Luke 9:1-2*)

(d) Names that indicate deity

Names that could only be used in reference to God are given to Jesus Christ throughout the New Testament;

- (i) He was called the Son of God (*Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 10:36*)
 - (ii) He was called Emmanuel meaning 'God with us' (*Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:14*).
 - (iii) He was called the word of God (*John 1:1-2, 14*)
 - (iv) He was referred to as God (*Titus 2:13*)
 - (v) He was known as Christ (Greek) or Messiah (Hebrew) meaning the 'Anointed One' (*Acts 2:36; John 1:41*). In the Old Testament times, the only people anointed or separated for service are the prophets, priests and kings.
 - (vi) He was called Lord, sometimes used as a title of courtesy or out of respect for His deity (*Luke 1:43; 2:11; John 20:28; Acts 16:31; 1Corinthians 12:3*)
- The name, 'Lord' comes from the translation of the Hebrew term 'Jehovah'. Thus, Jesus Christ is identified with the Old Testament Jehovah.

2.1.3 - The Union of Deity and humanity in Christ

It has been difficult to explain the incarnation of Jesus Christ in terms of His dual nature as God and man.

Jesus was truly God and truly man

He possessed both the human nature and the divine nature.

In His divine nature, he has all the qualities, properties or attributes of God.

In His human nature, He is not God pretending to be a man but truly man (*John 1:14*).

He had bodily and physical qualities of a man.

He did not cease to be God when He became a man.

He simply added a human nature to His divine nature.

He was God-man.

Reasons for the Incarnation

- (i) All mankind was sinful and a blameless sacrifice for sin was necessary. Since God could not die, He became flesh to provide the perfect sacrifice, paying the penalty for sin (*Hebrews 2:9*)
- (ii) Through the incarnation, Jesus revealed the Father to mankind (*John 14:7-11*)

(iii) By becoming man, Jesus provided us with an appropriate example (*1Peter 2:21-25*). As we identify with Him in responses to human situations, we recognize our goal of Christ-likeness (*Romans 8:29*)

2.1.4 - The Works of Christ

The works of Christ refers to His death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation

(a) His Death

His death was different from any other; it was voluntary (*John 10:18; Matthew 27:50*)

He accepted His death as the will of God for the salvation of mankind.

His death was not forced on Him by Satan or the Roman soldiers.

His death was a work in that it paid the penalty for our sin which is separation from God (*Mark 15:34*)

He appeased or calmed the anger of God against us and allowed the divine justice to fall upon Him so that we can be forgiven (*Romans 3:25-26*)

His death enables us to identify with Him through the crucifixion of self (*Galatians 5:20, 24; Romans 8:5-11*)

(b) His Resurrection

Jesus' work would have been incomplete and our faith would have been in vain if He had not risen to life again (*1Corinthians 15:14*)

His resurrection sets Christianity apart from all other religions and beliefs because no other religion can say that its founders' grave is empty.

Because He lives, we have inherited eternal life (*John 11:25-26*).

The resurrection of Christ is the keystone of the Christian faith. It proved the effectiveness of His death and gave it value (*Romans 4:25*)

Some of the reasons why the resurrection is of great importance to us are:-

- (i) Christ's work as a sinners' substitute has been accepted by God because God raised Him from the dead (*Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30*)
- (ii) It confirms His deity (*Romans 1:4*)
- (iii) He became our High priest (*Hebrews 9:24*), our intercessor (*Romans 8:34*), our mediator (*1Timothy 2:5*) and our advocate or lawyer (*1John 2:1*)
- (iv) It demonstrates God's great power in providing salvation for us (*Phil. 3:10*)
- (v) It guarantees our resurrection from the dead (*John 5:28; 6:40; Romans 8:11; 1Corinthians 15:20-23; 1Thessalonians 4:14*).

(c) His Ascension and Exaltation

After forty days of Christ's ministry following His resurrection, He ascended or returned to heaven (*Acts 1:9; 2:32-35; Ephesians 1:20; 1Peter 3:21-22*)

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ were the beginning of His exaltation

In His exaltation, He is 'lifted up' or 'raised to a higher level of honour and glory at the Father's right hand.

In His exaltation, He is placed in His proper place as Sovereign Lord (*Acts 2:33-36; 5:31, Ephesians 1:19-23; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16*)

In His exalted status, we receive some benefits such as:

- (i) He is spiritually present everywhere thus becoming the ideal object of worship for all people (*Ephesians 4:10; 1Corinthians 1:2*)
- (ii) He enters into His priestly ministry in heaven (*Hebrews 4:14; 5:5-10*)
- (iii) He bestows gifts upon His people and the church (*Ephesians 4:8-11; 1Corinthians 12:4-11*)
- (iv) He poured out the Holy Spirit upon His people (*Acts 2:33*)
- (v) As the exalted Prince and Saviour, He is giving repentance and faith to people (*Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2Peter 1:1*)
- (vi) He ascended into heaven with his humanity (His glorified body) and thus able to be a merciful and faithful High Priest since He has been able to share our human experiences (*Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16*)

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ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 3: THE HOLY SPIRIT

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

3.1 - The Holy Spirit : A Wise Administrator

When Jesus Christ was on earth, He was limited by His humanity because He could be in only one place at a time. He made a promise of the Holy Spirit who would replace Him and would have no limitations on the time He could stay or in the work that He could do.

Through the Holy Spirit, God not only commissions us with a job, He also stays with us and enables us to get the job done.

God also, through the Holy Spirit, takes up residence in us and gives us personal guidance, fellowship, comfort, and enablement for all of our spiritual needs.

3.1.1 - The deity of the Holy Spirit

In our previous studies of God, we discussed the six essences of God which also refer equally to the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

The three persons in the Godhead are equal in glory and majesty.

The Holy Spirit is truly God and His deity is established by His characteristics, His relationship with the other persons in the Trinity, the divine names given to Him, and the works which He performs.

(a) His characteristics of Divine nature

The characteristics of the divine nature of the Holy Spirit are as follows:

- (i) He is eternal (Hebrews 9:14)
- (ii) He is Omnipresent (Psalms 139:7-10)
- (iii) He is Omniscient (all-knowing) - 1Corinthians 2:10-11; Romans 8:26-27
- (iv) He is Omnipotent (all-powerful) - Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8, that is, He has the power and ability to bring about everything God wills, without any limitations.

(b) His titles of divine nature

Apostle Peter recognized the deity of the Holy Spirit when He addressed the deceitful Ananias (Acts 5:1-4).

Apostle Paul also affirms this fact when he stated that the Holy Spirit is Lord (2Corinthians 3:17-19). Only deity can be addressed as Lord in Paul's time.

(c) His association of divine nature

The deity of the Holy Spirit can also be assumed through His association with the other Persons of the Trinity, e.g.

(i) Baptismal formula (Matthew 28:19) - Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

(ii) The Apostolic benediction (2Corinthians 13:14) - the grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

(iii) 1Corinthians 12, we can see the inter-relationship between the three Persons and can only be explained on the basis of the full equality of each Person in the Trinity:

e.g. (a) The church is the Body of Christ - vs. 27

(b) God appoint ministries to help in its development - verse 28

(c) The Holy Spirit distributes gifts sovereignly as He wills - verses 4-6, 11

(iv) The Holy Spirit is the representative or agent of God the Father, and acts on His behalf on earth:

e.g. (a) He draws men to Christ - John 6:44

(b) He reveals truth - John 14:26; 16:13

(c) He guides - Romans 8:14.

(d) He spoke to Isaiah the Prophet (Isaiah 6:9-10) on behalf of God (Acts 28:25-28).

(v) All three Persons were active in creation. E.g. "Let us make man in our image" - Genesis 1:26

All the above references demonstrate scripturally that the Holy Spirit is God equally with the Father and the Son.

3.1.2 - The Personality of the Holy Spirit

(a) Essential component of Personality

There are three essential components of personality which are intellect (the ability to think), sensibility (the ability to feel) and will (the ability to make decisions).

- Romans 8:27 identifies the intellectual faculty of the Spirit

- Romans 15:30 describes the sensibility of the Spirit

- 1Corinthians 12:11 demonstrates the faculty of will as the Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers as He determines or wills.

(b) Other Elements of Personality

Other elements exist in addition to the essential components which contribute to our understanding of personality, and they are as follows:-

(i) Personal association

- The personality of the Holy Spirit is clearly implied by His association with other Persons through the baptismal formula and the apostolic benedictions.
- The Holy Spirit cannot be associated with impersonal things such as 'force' 'breath', 'power' or 'mind'.

(ii) Personal acts

- The Holy Spirit reveals.
- He searches (1Corinthians 2:10)
- He speaks, calling people into service (Acts 13; Revelations 2:7)
- He testifies (John 15:26)
- He directs His people in service, often forbidding or restraining them from some action (Acts 16:6-7)
- He intercedes for us (Romans 8:26)
- He teaches (John 14:26)
- He reproves (John 16:8-11)
- He guides us (John 16:13)
- Glorifies Christ (John 16:14)
- He regenerates (John 3:5)

(iii) Personal names

He was identified as the Counsellor who was going to replace Jesus Christ at His departure from earth (John 14:16, 26)

He was to act on behalf of Jesus Christ in performing Christ's ministry (John 15:26; 16:13-15)

He is called the Spirit of truth (John 14:17)

He is called the Spirit of life (Romans 8:2)

He is called the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29)

He is called the Spirit of adoption (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5-7)

He is called the Spirit of promise (Acts 1:5)

He is called the Spirit of holiness (Romans 1:4)

He is called the Spirit of Counsel (John 14:16, 26)

(iv) Personal Treatment

The Holy Spirit can be tested (Acts 5:9)

He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30)

He can be lied to (Acts 5:3)

He can be blasphemed and spoken against (Matthew 12:31,32)

He can be resisted (Acts 7:51)

He can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29)

The above qualities also prove the personality of the Holy Spirit.

3.1.3 - The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

It is difficult to understand much about the Holy Spirit, but we can be touched, blessed and directed by His Presence and enabled by His Power.

We can see the effects of His ministry (like that of the wind) but we don't understand its mysteries (John 3:8).

The ministry of the Holy Spirit can be considered in relation to

- (a) the non-believing world
- (b) the individual believer
- (c) the church as a whole.

(a) His Ministry to the Non-believing world

The Holy Spirit convicts men of the sinfulness of not believing in Jesus Christ (John 16:8-9).

The Holy Spirit reveals to men the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and the unrighteousness of others. He reminds them that it is because of Jesus' triumph over sin that God now declares sinners righteous and enables them to become righteous through faith in Him (John 16:10).

The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of judgement by showing the relation between Christ's death and resurrection and the judgement of the world. The cross signifies the payment of a debt: the penalty for sin (John 16:11).

The Holy Spirit witnesses to the unbeliever, convicts him of sin, and draws him to Christ (John 6:44). He then enlightens the believer concerning his spiritual responsibilities (1John 1:9)

(b) His Ministry to Individual believers

The Holy Spirit's ministry to believers can be placed under two categories:

(i) His help, (ii) His baptism

(i) His help (6 ways)

- We become believers through the work of the Holy Spirit. As unbelievers we were spiritually dead but became born spiritually when we came to God in repentance and faith. We became a new creation (2Corinthians 5:17), became born again by the Spirit and received a new nature (John 3:5-7; Eph 2:5; Titus 3:5). This experience is called regeneration.

- We receive power for witnessing from the Spirit (Acts 1:8). Circumstance, people, and evil spirits try to hinder us from sharing the gospel but the Spirit of God is the power source we need to draw upon for effective witnessing.

- The Holy Spirit ministers to us as a teacher (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13) He reveals God's truth to us (1Corinthians 2:12-14).

- We receive the Spirit's help through His intercession on our behalf.

In moments when we feel we cannot pray at all, we can count on the Holy Spirit's prayer (Romans 8:26)

- The Spirit guides us day by day towards a victorious, Christ like life. His rule in the life of the Christian is the secret of victory over sin. He is committed to our spiritual development. He wants to show us how to overcome our selfish nature (Romans 8:1-14) (A believer has two natures - the natural and the spiritual - Rom 7). The character of the natural man who lives only to satisfy his body is disgusting while the character of a spiritual man who allows the Holy Spirit to guide his life is beautiful. The solution to deal with the natural man is to walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16)

- The Holy Spirit produces the blessed fruit of the Christian life (Galatians 5:22-23). Walking by the Spirit implies that one depends on Him constantly and believes in His ability to provide deliverance in area of a person's life. We can be transformed as we are filled with and controlled by the Spirit. The fruit or qualities of the Spirit are the characteristics of the Holy Spirit.

(ii) His Baptism

The intimate relationship of the Holy Spirit with the believer can be illustrated with several descriptive terms:-

- Baptism means 'an immersion' (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5). When something is immersed in water, it is thoroughly met. We can equally be saturated or completely filled with God.

- Being filled describes the capacity to receive no more when full (Acts 2:4; 4:31). We remain filled to new levels with His divine fullness (His power and glory) as our capacity grows (Ephesians 5:18).

- Being poured upon by the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-29) can be seen in the light of the autumn rains required for crops to develop fully in time for harvest.

(iii) His Symbols

There are some biblical symbols which describe some aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit:

- Fire (Matthew 3:11) - Fire burns away what is not pure

- Dove (Matthew 3:16) - A dove represents gentleness or peace

- Anointing oil or Anointing by the Holy Spirit (1 Kings 19:16; 1 John 2:20) - Old Testament kings and prophets were often anointed with oil as a sign of the Lord's approval of their service.

- Gift (Luke 11:13) - The Holy Spirit is the Father's gift to us

- Streams of Living water (John 7:37-39) - The Holy Spirit fills us to overflowing with new life.

- Seal or deposit (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13-14) - The Holy Spirit is given as a guarantee of our eternal life with the Father.

- Breath or wind (John 20:22; Ezekiel 37:9-14) - The Holy Spirit is the breath of God which gives us life.

(c) His Ministry to the Church

Unlike the special anointing for a specific task of Old Testament times, the baptism in the Holy Spirit was to be the believers basic enablement for consistent and effective spiritual life and service (John 7:38-39; 14:17)

The result of this new indwelling and powerful presence is the dramatic growth of the church as believers share their faith and experience with others.

As the Spirit indwells the members of the church and directs their corporate activities, they have the ability to carry out the work and will of God on earth.

Not only were followers of Jesus enabled to be effective witnesses, but they were also empowered successfully to defend the gospel (Mark 13:9-11, Matthew 26:69-75; Acts 2; 4:8-20)

The Holy Spirit controls the evangelistic mission of the church, directing His servants where to go and where not to go (Acts 13:2; 16:6-7; 13:2).

The Holy Spirit also directs in the proper administration of the church which enabled the church to grow rapidly and develop a spirit of unity (Acts 15:28-29)

Through His continual direction, the Spirit led Paul and others to give encouragement, comfort, doctrinal teaching, warning, and to prescribe discipline to the church through the inspired epistles e.g. 1Corinthians 7:40; Hebrews 12:4-11

In the maturing process, the Holy Spirit, as the all-wise administrator, equips each believer with the gifts that are necessary to carry His function in the world and in the church, the Body of Christ (Romans 12:4-8; 1Corinthians 12:1-25; Ephesians 4:11-16)

In summary, the Holy Spirit provides the church with:-

- (1) Power to evangelize;
- (2) Wisdom and courage necessary to defend the faith;
- (3) Appropriate gifts for ministry to the entire body of Christ as well as to individual members;
- (4) Human leadership to direct the work;
- (5) The vision and inspiration necessary to fulfil the Great Commission

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SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 4: THE SUBJECTS OF GOD - ANGELS

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

4.1 - Angels:- Armies of Darkness and Armies of Light

Spiritual conflict is what forms the background for the study of angels.

In the Spiritual realm, Satan's diabolical spiritual forces seek to undermine our defences and to kill us spiritually.

We are secure as long as our trust is in God who provides assistance through His greater spiritual forces in resisting our enemy.

4.1.1 - The Nature of angels

(a) Their origin

Angels are a finite order or group of created beings who are God's messengers or ministers. They are greater in intelligence and power than man.

Some angels serve God's purpose through their holiness and voluntary execution of God's will. Other angels who rebelled against God are forever separated from Him.

Angels means messengers.

Angels were created by God though we don't know exactly when (Psalms 148:2-5; Colossians 1:16), but it must have been before the creation of man.

Angels are immortal, that is, they will never cease to exist (Luke 20:36)

(b) Their characteristics

Angels are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:7, 13-14), which means they have no physical bodies (Ephesians 6:12).

Man is not a spirit but has a two-fold nature - material (flesh) and immaterial (spirit).

Angels often reveal themselves in human form (Judges 6:11-24; John 20:12) but it does not mean they have material bodies as part of their necessary existence. They assume material bodies on occasion as a means for them to communicate with human beings.

Angels are personal beings. They exhibit the basic aspects of personality which are intellect, emotions, and will (2Samuel 14:20; Luke 4:34; Revelations 12:12; Luke 15:10; 2 Timothy 2:26; etc.).

Angels are sexless (Matthew 22:30). They are not classified according to sex although some are given masculine names (e.g. Michael, Gabriel).

They are sometimes referred to as sons of God (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7).

Angels possess superhuman intelligence and power (2Peter 2:11; Psalms 103:20; 2Thessalonians 1:7).

The evil angels are also very powerful (John 12:31; Luke 11:21, 22:53; 10:19; Ephesians 6:12). Even though evil angels are powerful, their power is limited as can be seen in the fact that it will take only one angel to bind Satan and cast him into the bottomless pit at the end of this age (Revelations 20:1-3).

Angels are not omnipresent (Job 1:7, 1Peter 5:8; Zechariah 1:11; Daniel 10:5, 12-14).

Angels are not glorified men. There is a clear distinction between angels and men (Hebrews 12:22-23; 2:16)

Man, is for a while a little lower than the angels (Psalms 8:4-5) but in future shall be higher (Hebrews 2:7; 1Corinthians 6:3). We shall judge angels, which shows that those who are inferior, or of lesser importance, do not judge those who are superior.

4.1.2 - The Moral Characteristics of angels

Angels were created holy

All angels were created holy, but some fell from their holy state.
They had the ability either to sin or not to sin

The angels that fell chose to leave their positions of authority and their own home by an act of their own will (Jude 6). Satan led one-third of the angels into rebellion against God out of self-interest and pride (1Timothy 3:6; Revelations 12:4). The result of their action was the judgement of God (2 Peter 2:4; Matthew 25:41).

The others did not sin but remained with the Father as the holy angels (Mark 8:38; Matthew 6:10; 18:10).

The devil sometimes tries to impersonate the holy angels who are regarded as angels of light (2Corinthians 11:14).

Several portions of the Scripture which refer primarily to earthly kings seem to symbolize Satan (Ezekiel 28:12-19; Isaiah 14:12-15).

4.1.3 - The Number of angels

The Bible does not give a precise number of angels but it does imply a great multitude of angels.

Some examples are found in the following references: 2Kings 6:14-17; Psalms 68:17; Deuteronomy 33:2; Daniel 7:10; Hebrews 12:22; Revelations 5:11.

Satan's legion of evil angels also exist and they are quite large (Revelations 12:7-12)

4.1.4 - The organization and activity of angels

There is an effective organization of spiritual forces to carry out specific tasks assigned to them, e.g.

1Kings 22:19 - God is enthroned with all the host of angels around Him;

Matthew 26:53 - The angels are organized in the form of an army (e.g. 12 legions) and are always on alert.

Luke 2:8-14 - A great company of them formed a choir.

Revelations 19:10-14 - There is precision, order, organization, authority and purpose in the triumphant array of angels.

The angels stand in the Presence of God to worship and praise Him (Psalms 103:20, 148:2; Isaiah 6:1-7; Revelations 5:9-12; Matthew 18:10)

They rejoice in the mighty creative acts of God (Job 38:7; Luke 15:10)

They are ministering spirits to carry out God's will (Psalms 103:20; Hebrews 1:14).

Examples of their activities as ministering spirits (Acts 27:23-24; Act 8:26; 10:3-7, 12:7-10; Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43; 2 Kings 6:8-23; Psalms 34:7).

Angels are agents of judgement (2Kings 19:35; Acts 12:23)

Angels appear to have influence in the affairs of nations.

Spiritual battles go on at all times in the heavenly realms because evil powers exist over nations (Daniel 10:13, 20) and these are opposed by holy angels (Daniel 10:13, 21). The conflict can be so intense such that the leader of the holy angels, Archangel Michael is engaged in it (Daniel 10:13; Jude 9).

The orders of holy angels can be described as:-

(i) Cherubim who are the guardians of the throne of God. They also guarded the entrance to the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24; 2Kings 19:15; Ezekiel 10:1-22; 28:14-16).

(ii) Seraphim are leaders in the worship of God (Isaiah 6:2, 6)

(iii) Watchers are apparently assigned to observe specific activities. They are seen in the context of bringing God's message to man. (Daniel 4:13, 17)

(iv) Living creatures which are different from ordinary angels, seraphim and cherubim. They appear to worship God, and to be active about His throne (Revelations 4:6-9; 6:1-7; 15:7)

All in all, this body of holy angels serve God effectively and are ever ready to carry out His purposes for His people.

(a) Scope of Holy angelic activity

The scope or extents of the activities of holy angels are as follows:

(i) The intervention or involvements of angels in the normal course of human affairs are occasional and exceptional. Angels do not intervene by their own decision but only as commanded by God. God uses them at times for special displays of power (Deuteronomy 33:2; Hebrews 1:7; Psalms 104:4; Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2)

(ii) The power of angels is dependent upon and comes from God. They cannot influence the human mind directly, for this is the work of the Holy Spirit. They operate within limits.

(iii) Angelic appearances generally precede and accompany important new turning points in the unfolding of God's plan, for example,

- At creation (Job 38:7);
- When the Law was given (Galatians 3:19);
- Just before and at the birth of Christ (Luke 1:11,26; 2:13);
- During Jesus' temptation in the wilderness and in Gethsemane (Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43); at the resurrection (Matthew 28:2);
- At the ascension (Acts 1:10-11);
- During the end-time activities before the coming of Christ (Matthew 25:31)

(b) Organized activity of unholy angels

In the realm of spiritual darkness the devil has his organization.

Satan is referred to as the 'prince of this world' (John 14:30; 16:11) and as the ruler of the kingdom of the air (Ephesians 2:2)

Satan has a throne (Revelations 2:13) and is the head of an evil organization (Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 2:15).

He has angels (Matthew 25:41) who oppose God and His people and try to defeat His will (Revelations 12:7-9).

The evil organization are set in ranks based on levels of authority (Ephesians 6:12)
A lot can be learnt about unholy angels by examining their leader.

(i) Their Leader

- He is called Satan, which means adversary or opponent. He is primarily the adversary of God and also of man (Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 13:39; 1Peter. 5:8).
- He is called the devil, which means slanderer (one who makes false charges against someone. He accuses God to man (Genesis 3:1-4) and man to God (Job 1:9, 16; Revelations 12:10).

- He is called the tempter, because he entices (tempts) man to sin (Matthew 4:3; 1Thessalonians 3:5).

Since he is limited and is not all-powerful, all-knowing, or everywhere present, the devil uses different means to oppose God. Since he can't attack God directly, he therefore attacks man who is the crown of God's creation in various ways:-

(1) he lies (John 8:44; 2Corinthians 11:3); (2) he tempts (Matthew 4:1); (3) he steals (Matthew 13:19); (4) he torments (2Corinthians 12:7) ; (5) he hinders (1Thessalonians 2:18) ; (6) he impersonates in order to deceive (2Corinthians 11:14); (7) he accuses (Revelations 12:10); (8) he possesses (John 13:27); (9) he kills and devours (John 8:44; 1Peter 5:8); (10) he sifts (separates or screens) - Luke 22:31.

Satan appears to have been permitted to keep the authority he was given at his creation. He thus controls many evil angels who give him full devotion as their leader and they willingly lend their services to help him achieve his wicked purposes.

(ii) Their activity

Unholy angels oppose God, His people, and His program as a militant (fighting) part of Satan's kingdom of darkness (Matthew 25:41; Ephesians 6:12; Revelations 12:7-12).

There is no difference between the unholy angelic spirits and demons; they are one and the same thing.

The demons try to separate the people of God from God (Romans 8:38)
They oppose holy angels (Daniel 10:12-11:1`).

They afflict people with physical and mental illness (Matthew 9:33; 12:22; Mark 5:1-16; Luke 9:37-42)

They spread false doctrine (2Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1Timothy 4:1)

They possess people and even animals (Matthew 4:24; Mark 5:8-14; Luke 8:2; Acts 8:7; 16:16)

Occasionally, God uses the demons, in spite of themselves, to accomplish His purposes of punishing the ungodly (Psalms 78:49; 1Kings 22:23) and of chastening or disciplining the good (Job 1-2; 1Corinthians 5:5)

(iii) Their fate

Demons serve to illustrate what will happen to those who are morally evil.

The following passage describes their fate (Matthew 8:29; 25:41; 2Thessalonians 2:8; Revelations 12:12; 20:10; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6)

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SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 5: THE SUBJECTS OF GOD - MANKIND

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

5.1 - Mankind: Human subjects of the Creator

People have tried in a variety of ways to explain the origin of man e.g. the philosophers, evolutionists, social scientists, etc.

Some believe that man is merely an accident, without meaning or purpose. But we believe that we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' (Psalms 139:14, 16)

We are made in the image of God to rule the earth justly, creatively and responsibly. We are given intelligence, feeling, and the ability to make morally responsible choices.

The term 'man' or mankind' refers to both members of the human race, male and female.

5.1.1 - Man's Origin

(a) A Special creation

Man is unique and is the result of a special divine act. (Isaiah 45:11-12; Genesis 1:27, 5:1-2; 6:7; 9:6; Deuteronomy 4:32; Psalms 100:3; James 3:9)

First, He formed man out of the earthly dust; then He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 2:7), and man became a living being.

The divine inbreathing imparted to man a spiritual nature from God that gave him a position far above all other creatures.

The other creatures were created by a divine command which was put into effect immediately (Genesis 1:20, 24).

The most important distinction between man and all other creatures is that man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Man's likeness to God is not physical but a moral and spiritual likeness.

Other evidences of a difference between man and animals are:-

- (i) Man has the power of speech. He has the ability to communicate with other human beings because he is able to think, understand and express his thoughts through speech. Animals can't.

- (ii) Man has the ability to enjoy beauty while animals can't appreciate beauty.
- (iii) Man has the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Animals do not have this capacity. Dogs may be trained to obey but cannot learn what is morally wrong.
- (iv) Man has a deep sense of the need to worship a superior being but animals do not have that capacity to worship or to express reverence.
- (v) Man can plan ahead, anticipate future events, and bring about changes of events. Animals are incapable of creativity or foresight. Anything the animals do in preparation for what lies ahead is simply a response to their natural instincts.

Man is therefore a product of special creation of God and did not evolve from a lower form of animal life.

(b) Made in God's Image (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; 1Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9)

The term, 'in the image of God' does not mean that man is an exact copy of God. It means that in some ways he resembles God.

Man is not made in the physical likeness of God because God is Spirit.

Our likeness to God is in our Personality;

- Like God, we are personal beings
- We have the possibility of interacting with God in a personal relationship through our human spirit and also the capacity, like Him, to have fellowship with other beings.

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SUBJECT: BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LESSON 6: STRANGE & FALSE DOCTRINES

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction:

Read 2Timothy 3:1-9; 1Corinthians 4:1-6; 2Timothy 4:1-4; 2Peter 2:1-3; 3:14-18; Matthew 7:15-20; Acts 20:25-31; 1John 4:1-3

We live in times when the Scripture is being fulfilled about false teachings and false prophecies. We have been warned ahead of time by the Lord Himself and also the apostles about the emergence of pedlars of falsehood and deception (Matthew 24:4-5). They creep in deceptively wearing a camouflage of a sheep, and yet are wolves and thieves (2Timothy 3:6; Matthew 7:15; John 10:10).

Many have been misled by these sweet-talking false prophets and teachers who distort the word of God and also infiltrate the church with their teachings. False teaching is like poison hidden in sweet things and given to unsuspecting people to drink or eat. It is like coating lies with truth. Half-truth is a lie and a deception.

Why do believers fall for these things and why are they so gullible?

1. They do not read or understand their Bibles (Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1:1-3; 119:97-98). Some read the Bible in verses rather than in context. If you don't know the word, you become easily deceived, indoctrinated and therefore follow blindly in ignorance (Hosea 4:6; Ephesians 4:14; Psalms 119:130).
2. There are too many interpretations and arguments given about what the Bible says, thereby confusing the ignorant and immature (2Peter 1:19-21)
3. Believers place too much trust on people delivering these messages without cross-checking for themselves what the Bible says (Acts 17:10-11). We need to test the spirits to know whether they are of God (1John 4:1).
4. Inadequate and unbalanced teaching of God's word leading to spiritual immaturity and unfruitfulness (Hebrews 5:12-14; 2Peter 1:8-9; Ephesians 4:11-14; 1Peter 2:1-2).

Wrong/ False teachings:

Some wrong teachings are not given with the intention to deceive but they come through ignorance and immaturity. The teachings are provided with incorrect interpretations to Scripture, which can be misleading. The teachers who teach these things and are sincerely wrong can learn from their mistakes and immaturity as they grow in faith and knowledge of the Lord, and correct themselves.

Several other wrong teachings come with the deliberate intention to deceive and to mislead, either for personal gain or as led by the devil. These types of teachings are very dangerous and could have eternal consequences.

There are several false or wrong teachings spreading round the world and in the churches today. Some have their origins from sects and other organisations such as Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, New Age Movement, Seventh Day Adventist, etc while some come from mainstream churches like the Roman Catholic Church, etc. A large number come from individuals or groups with the intention to cause damage or division in the church.

We will select a few doctrines that are currently identified.

1. Once saved, forever saved – Can a believer lose his / her salvation? (John 17:11-12; Romans 8:38-39; Hebrews 6:1-8; 10:24-31; Galatians 3:1-6, 10-14; 1John 1:6-10; 2:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-10; 2Peter 3:9; John 3:16-19; 1John 5:16-17; 1Corinthians 3:15)
2. Forbidding speaking in tongues and prophecy (1Corinthians 14:39; Mark 16:17; Acts 2:1-4; 10: 44-48; 19:1-7)
3. Water baptism - how many times in water? – You don't bury a dead body more than once! (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:4-11; Hebrews 9:27-28)
4. Is Sabbath for believers? Should they observe it? (Colossians 2:13-17; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:13-16; Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:27-28; John 7:21-23; Matthew 28:1-7; Acts 20:7; 1Corinthians 16:2; Revelations 1:9-10)
5. Are women allowed to minister or to lead in church? (Genesis 1:27-28; 3:14-19; Galatians 3:28; 1Corinthians 14:34; 1Timothy 2:11-12; Acts 18:2, 18, 24-26; Romans 16:3-5; 1Corinthians 16:19; Philippians 4:2-3; Acts 21:8-9; Luke 2:36-38; Revelations 1:4-6; 1Peter 2:4-5, 9)
6. Is it wrong for believers to use the name Jesus instead of the Hebrew name, Yeshua? (John 14:12-14; Philippians 2:9-11; Matthew 1:21-23; Mark 16:17)
7. Many others

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SUBJECT: BIBLE STUDY METHODS

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

1.1 Introduction

This course is to be studied as complimentary to the subject of Bible Survey. Bible Survey covers topics such as the Origin of the Bible, the Author of the Bible, the Structure and Classifications of the Bible, and the Message of the Bible.

This course will help to understand effective ways of studying the Bible so as to benefit from its teachings and messages.

Written assignments will be expected at the end of this course and will be assessed for grades.

This course is about a very important activity: the careful, methodical study of the Bible. It is divided into four lessons of study. The first part is an introduction to the basic principles, the need and reasons for Bible Study, terminology, and relationships that are essential to all effective methods of Bible study. The last part of the course presents other important methods of Bible study.

The 4 lessons are:

- Lesson 1 – Introduction
- Lesson 2 – Guides to Understanding the Bible
- Lesson 3 – Aids to Bible Study
- Lesson 4 – Types or Methods of Bible Study

While much in the course is necessarily intellectual comment on how to study, constant emphasis is placed on the student's spiritual improvement as the main purpose of the course.

To understand the Bible, one must do more than merely read it. Reading it has value but often fails to make clear the relationship between different parts of the Bible. When one studies the Bible with an organized plan in mind, one would have to write down important findings that help to see the unity that is present throughout the Scriptures. Furthermore, such study helps to remember God's warnings and obey His commands. Obedience to God is the result of personal application of devotional Bible study. This application will build up one's faith in Christ and strengthen their spiritual life.

This study emphasizes the value of skilled procedures of observation and interpretation as aids to understanding the Bible and accomplishing the main purpose of the course. This purpose is to help in the application of Bible truth to one's own life and to share it with others.

Biblical knowledge of God and His ways brings us the responsibility of sharing that knowledge with others. The world is hungry for the truth of God. It is God's plan that His kingdom grow because of this principle of sharing. Jesus shared in this way. He taught people, then He sent them to teach others. Luke 10:1 tells of His sending out 72 men ahead of Him into the towns where He was about to go. They could share with others what they had learned from Jesus. We too must share in this way.

1.2 The Need for Study of Scripture

The ultimate intent of the Bible is to change lives. What you learn from it should make a difference in one's attitude and actions. The Holy Spirit is not interested in imparting intellectual knowledge only. His goal is to prepare people spiritually and intellectually for good works. The goal is the understanding of Bible truth, and then to apply it to one's life. The classic verse declaring the *inspiration* of Scripture and the goal of Scripture is 2Timothy 3:16-17. The goal is, "*That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" The Word of God can only do this as one studies its pages.

Disciplined study is *defined as diligent application of the mind, careful examination of the facts, and deep thought about them.* In thinking about the facts, one draws some conclusions and makes some decisions. When these decisions become part of one's life, it will become more based on scriptural principles, and fulfilling 2Timothy 3:16-17.

The entrance of the Word of God brings light (*Psalms 119:130*). God's rules for living lead to peace, joy, and satisfaction.

1.3 The Reason for Study of the Bible

There are many reasons everyone should study the Bible. The most important reasons are:

- a) It is a way to grow spiritually, and
- b) It is a method of learning God's plan for us.

To be physically healthy and normal, children must eat the right foods essential to that growth. As God's children, we must also grow spiritually. In 2Peter 3:18, we read, "*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*"

Our spiritual food is the Bible. As we study it, we get to know our Saviour Jesus Christ better. This knowledge helps us become strong Christians "*until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the*

whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants” (Ephesians 4:13–14).

In studying the Bible, we not only learn of God’s plans for our future but also of His promises for the present.

The Bible is the food that keeps our souls alive. As we read it daily we receive health and strength for both soul and body. Jesus said, *“Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4).

Through His Word, God inspires faith for salvation, hope for our future, and love for others. Inspiration is an influence that leads us to good ideas or actions. Many poets, musicians, and artists have received their inspiration from the Bible. The Bible gave them ideas for creating various art forms.

The truth we find in the Bible answers our most important questions, giving us the meaning and purpose of life. It frees us from ignorance and error. Jesus said, *“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”* (John 8:32).

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SUBJECT: BIBLE STUDY METHODS

LESSON 2: GUIDES TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Psalms 119:130 – *“The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple”.*

There are rules that are essential for the effective study and understanding of the Bible. The following are the most important ones to adopt.

2.1 Use of Context

The context of a scriptural portion includes all that surrounds it. The verses, paragraphs, and chapters before and after a text make up its immediate context. The extended context consists of that portion of Scripture less closely related to the passage and may embrace paragraphs, a chapter, or even an entire book of Scripture.

Use of context to interpret Scripture will help to prepare lessons and sermons that are true to biblical truth.

Errors in doctrine and practice are made when a single verse of Scripture is taken out of context and given the wrong meaning. So-called “proof texts” often are passages of Scripture taken out of setting and used to “prove” something someone wants to believe.

The Bible warns that ignorant and unstable people may give false explanations of Scripture (2 Peter 3:16) and encourages those who minister to seek God’s approval by correctly teaching the message of God’s truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

2.1.1 Context Illustrated

As a single thread does not show all the pattern of a cloth material, so a single verse of Scripture does not give all the meaning of truth. However, as with embroidery in a cloth material, the full pattern of truth is seen when all the threads of Scripture are properly woven together.

When one uses the context, the Bible is the best interpreter of its own truths. This is commonly called “the analogy of faith.”

Let us see how the context can be used to interpret Scripture.

Read the Parable of the Weeds in Matthew 13:24–30. Notice that when the crowd left, Jesus explained the parable to His disciples. Now read the context (Matthew 13:36–43) for Jesus’ interpretation of the parable. Most parables are self-explanatory if you pay careful attention to the context.

A detailed account of Jesus’ visit to Jerusalem for the Feast of Shelters is given in John 7:10–39. On the last day of the feast Jesus stood up and cried with a loud voice, ‘Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him’” (v. 38). These words are explained in the context by John, the inspired author: “By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified” (v. 39). The explanation given by the context is the correct interpretation because the writer states this directly in the Scripture.

2.1.2 Words Defined by Context

The context can be helpful in finding the meaning of words. We must be careful to let the context of a word determine its meaning and importance because the context of a word limits its meaning and keeps it from being interpreted in more than one sense.

Mark 12:18 tells about the beliefs of the Sadducees: “Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.” This was the basis of their question to Jesus Christ as expressed in Mark 12:19–23. Acts 23:8 amplifies this information and includes a statement about the beliefs of the Pharisees.

2.2 Use of Setting

The Scriptures are better understood if you know the setting of the writing or speech. Nearly every utterance Jesus made was a response to circumstances. His teaching on the new birth was an answer to the inner need of a religious man (John 3:1–21). His dialogue or talk on the “Water of Life” was given by a well to a spiritually thirsty woman (John 4:1–30). When the disciples returned from the Samaritan village, Jesus was prompted to instruct them about food and the will of God (John 4:31–35) and the need for labourers in the harvest (John 4:36–38). In each instance the setting is important to full understanding of the teaching.

Jesus’ teaching on lost things (sheep, coin, a son) in Luke 15:4–32 can be better understood when you know the circumstances that prompted His stories. Luke introduced this teaching by saying, “Now the tax collectors and ‘sinners’ were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ Then Jesus told them this parable” (Luke 15:1–3).

The attitude of the shepherd, the woman, and the father toward lost things is in sharp contrast to the attitude of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. However, the anger of the elder son toward his forgiven brother is a perfect example of the attitude of the Pharisees toward the sinners Jesus forgave.

2.3 Use of Literal and Figurative Language

2.3.1 Literal Language

The *literal* meaning of language is the natural or normal way it is used. It follows the ordinary sense of the words. In Scripture, this means that the words have ordinary meanings.

The Bible is not written in a secret code. The Holy Spirit often gives an enriched meaning to a language, but this does not mean that the basic meaning of the words has been altered.

In Mark 8:27, we are told that Jesus and His disciples went away to the villages near Caesarea Philippi; it means that there were villages in that area and that they did visit them. This is the literal meaning of Scripture. It means what it plainly says.

There is no reason to doubt that Eden, Adam and Eve, Noah, Jonah, the nation of Israel, the church, or the New Jerusalem are literal persons, places, and things.

The literal language of Scripture is not difficult to understand.

In general, the Bible can be taken at face value to mean what it says in the normal way that language is usually understood. God revealed it to man to be a source of information to him, not to conceal truth from him. Only when the language used is obviously not literal should one seek a figurative meaning.

2.3.2 Figurative Language

Language can also be used in a *figurative* way. Figurative means the expression of one thing to mean something else. Figurative language is used to explain a thing by picturing something to which it can be compared. It presents pictures to the mind that illustrate other ideas. This is a perfectly proper use of language and is illustrated in John 7:38. In this verse Jesus says, "*He who believes in me, as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*" This is a picture painted by Jesus Christ of a person with streams of water pouring from his heart. John provided a meaning of this in John 7:39 of the work that the Holy Spirit will do in a person who believes in Jesus Christ.

In the Bible, God is presented as a *rock*, a *fortress*, and a *shield*. Israel is referred to as a *vineyard*, a good man as a *tree flourishing by the riverside*, and the devil as a *roaring lion* who goes about to seize its prey.

Figurative language is common in all cultures as a medium of communication that adds understanding.

The Bible uses for its teaching word pictures drawn from everyday life in the home and from the countryside. This makes it possible to relate the Word to ordinary human interests. Thus the Bible truth makes an impression on the mind and can be easily remembered.

2.3.3 Literal versus Figurative Language – John 3:1-8; 6:48-59

Figures of speech are scattered throughout the Bible and are not always easy to detect and understand. How can one tell if a passage is figurative or literal?

Here is the simple rule: *Scripture must be taken literally whenever possible; it is figurative only if it cannot be accepted as literal.* Context and common sense will help to decide whether a given passage is literal or figurative. Even figurative language conveys a literal truth.

To understand figurative language we should examine the way it is used in Scripture and we need to study carefully the background of both Old and New Testaments. Only in this way can we understand the figures of speech that are used.

One of the most common figures of speech is the simile. Similes are expressed comparisons of two different things or ideas in which something is said to be “like” or “as” something. See Psalm 103:13–16 and Proverbs 26:14 (NKJV) for examples.

Nicodemus was puzzled when Jesus said that a man must be born again to see the kingdom of God (John 3:1–8). His response was, “*How can a man be born when he is old? . . . Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!*” (verse 4). Jesus was using figurative language, but Nicodemus was taking Him literally.

A similar thing happened with the woman of Samaria: she thought Jesus was referring to water from Jacob’s well when He talked about life-giving water (John 4:7–15).

Sometimes people create problems by taking figurative expressions literally. When Jesus referred to His flesh as bread, the crowd argued (John 6:48–52). They asked, “*How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*” (verse 52). Jesus then referred to His flesh as food and His blood as drink. At this, many of His disciples stopped following Him because the saying was hard to understand (John 6:60–66).

Common sense would tell you (even if the context did not) that Jesus would not literally feed them His flesh and give them His blood to drink. Peter understood this. When the crowd went away he expressed his confidence that Jesus’ words gave eternal life (John 6:66–69). Even today among some believers there is misunderstanding on this matter. Some say that the bread and wine of Communion become literally the blood and body of the Lord Jesus.

The fact is that Jesus was speaking figuratively, teaching us that through the suffering He would endure in His body and the shedding of His blood on the Cross, spiritual life would be provided to humanity.

2.3.4 Human Language Has Limitations

Every coin has two sides. On one side, the Bible is understandable to ordinary people because it is written in ordinary language. But on the other side, how can an *infinite* (limitless) God explain infinite truth to *finite* (limited) man?

Since man is finite, his language is also finite or limited. We say that God has accommodated Himself to man. That is, He has put spiritual truth in as simple a form as possible so we can understand some of it. You cannot understand everything there is to understand about God. But, you can understand the things that are important for you to know.

2.4 Understanding Progressive Revelation – *Job 11:7-9; Ephesians 1:15-19; Psalms 103:13-14*

God has always accommodated the limitations of man and his sinful condition in His dealings with man. The story of the Bible opens with Adam and Eve in the presence of God in the Garden of Eden. Their sin resulted in banishment from God's presence. That separation from God was, and is, very deep and far-reaching.

Man was sealed in a prison of his five senses. Nothing seemed real to him unless he could see it, touch it, taste it, feel it, or hear it. Sin had cut him off from God. Over time, the infinite love and patience of God and His Spirit worked slowly into the consciousness of men.

The Israelites had to be chosen as a living object lesson. The law had to be given. God's plan had to be worked out over long years of history. He had to find special men like Abraham and Moses who were sensitive to His voice. He sent prophets to preach His words. Finally, "*when the fullness of time had come*" (Galatians 4:4, ESV) God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. By His death on the cross, Jesus made a bridge for man to come to God once again.

Through all of this, God was giving man more and more information about Himself.

This had to be progressive information for two reasons:

- (1) The human mind could only take in so much truth at a time, and
- (2) Sin had made man morally unable to contact God.

Isaiah understood this when he said that teaching had to be given, "line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:10, ESV). Because of progressive revelation the Redeemer God is seen more clearly in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.

2.5 Scripture Interprets Scripture

"Scripture is its own best commentary." What this means is that when a passage of Scripture seems difficult, one should try to find other Scripture that sheds light on it. The first place to look is in its immediate context.

Context simply means "*all the words around a passage.*" Needless to say, this is where familiarity with the whole Bible comes in. Seriously digging into the Word is therefore important. The more familiar one becomes with all Scripture, the easier it will be to find verses and passages that shed light on other passages.

Study of Scripture is like a little stone dropped into still water. There are ever-widening circles that ripple from it: single words must be interpreted in the light of the sentence, the sentence in the light of the verse, the verse in the light of the section of the chapter to which it belongs, and so on. At the widest point, the whole Bible sheds light on its parts.

The total body of Scripture is the total context and guide for understanding any specific portion of it.

No doctrine can be based on single verses for which no other support can be found. Enough information should be provided to support the doctrine or teaching.

2.6 Harmony of the Whole Bible – *2Peter 1:19-21; 2Timothy 3:16-17*

One can use context to help understand the Bible. All the way from a single sentence to the whole collection of books, there is one single system of truth presented. In fact, one must use the whole system of truth to interpret any individual part of it. This is one of the convincing evidences of revelation.

The writings of so many men, over such long stretches of history, are in harmony with each other. The key, of course, is that the Holy Spirit was the true author. Men were just the instruments.

Many themes can be traced throughout the Bible, but the main one is *Redemption through Christ*. The Old Testament pointed to Him in symbols and in prophecy. The New Testament is the record of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Jesus said the Old Testament Scriptures taught about Him. After His resurrection, He taught two disciples on the road to Emmaus: “*And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all Scriptures the things concerning himself*” (Luke 24:27).

2.7 Unity in Meaning – *Deuteronomy 12:32; Revelation 22:18*

Unity in meaning reminds us that Scripture does not contradict itself. We must be careful not to bring our own meanings to Scripture when trying to find proof for them.

The correct approach is to let the words speak for themselves.

As you take a Scripture and examine it thoroughly, its true meaning will emerge. It may or may not be what you expected to find. God has inspired the authors. God does not contradict Himself. Therefore, the Bible will not contradict itself. If there are passages that seem to be opposed to each other, it is because of the student’s lack of understanding or lack of information. In such cases, always reserve judgment until further light can be shed on the problem.

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SUBJECT: BIBLE STUDY METHODS

LESSON 3: BIBLE STUDY AIDS

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

There are things that help with better understanding and ease of navigation through the Bible. The Bible is a big book and also a library of books. To make the best use of the Bible and to enjoy its contents will require the use of the following aids:

3.1 The Bible Structure

Bible Survey as a subject provides a detailed understanding of the structure and classification of the Bible. Key points will not be repeated here but a few references or summary will be made.

At the front of the Bible is a list of the books of the Old and New Testaments. This list also gives the page numbers where each book begins. The Old Testament is listed first.

The Old Testament was given to the Jews, who were also called Hebrews or Israelites. God chose them to receive His truths, write them, and teach them to others. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew because it was the language of the Jews.

The Old Testament covers the history and terms of God's relationship with humanity, from Creation to the coming of the Saviour who would establish a new covenant.

The New Testament gives the history and the conditions of the new covenant, or pact, that God made with all who accept His Son Jesus Christ as their Saviour. The New Testament tells the story of the life of Jesus Christ, and also what He taught.

When the New Testament was written, Greek was a commonly known language. Since this new pact was for all people – not for the Jews alone – the New Testament was written in Greek, thus making it possible for most people to read it.

The Old Testament is very important because it reveals God's plan for humanity. But the Old Testament was a temporary pact until Jesus Christ would come to establish the permanent pact. We are now living under the new pact – the New Testament.

The New Testament is based upon the Old Testament. It not only explains the relationship between the two pacts, but it relates the fulfilment of many Old Testament prophecies. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew for the Jews, and the New Testament was written in Greek for the larger world population.

Order and structure are necessary for the working of any system, whether household, literary, or otherwise. Thus, the Bible is arranged systematically so that one can more easily find its treasures and understand them. Regardless of the translation, our Bibles hold to the same chapters and verses so people do not get lost.

Indexes and the table of contents help direct readers to specific places in the Bible.

3.2 The Bible Reference

To help in reading and studying, every book of the Bible is divided into chapters. Each chapter is also divided into smaller sections that are numbered on the left side. These are called *verses* or *Bible texts*. Reference to any Bible text is made by saying the name of the book, then the number of the chapter and the number of the verse. All of these together can be called the Bible *reference*.

The best way to find Bible references is to memorize the books of the Bible in their proper order. These are covered under Bible Survey.

3.3 The Study Reference

Some Bibles (especially English Bibles) have study references down the centre, in side margins, at the bottom of each page, or after each verse. These are sometimes called cross references or marginal references, and they help to find other related verses.

A tiny letter by certain words in a Bible verse refers one to look for the same letter in the reference area. By that letter one will find a Scripture reference which will lead to a related verse.

It's recommended to invest in a good Study Bible, as one can use this system to develop interesting studies on the topics one is reading.

The references and other comments as found in some Bibles are helpful, but they are not divinely inspired. They were given by Bible teachers and scholars to help in the use and understanding of the Bible more easily.

3.4 The Bible Concordance

A concordance is an alphabetical index of some principal words in the Bible. This index gives the references in the Bible where a particular word is used.

There are several instances when one may wish to use a concordance. For example, if one wishes to read several verses that contain the word *love*. One will need to look up the word in the concordance. The references are listed, together with a few words from each Bible verse that uses the word *love*.

A concordance can also be of help when one wishes to know where in the Bible to find a particular verse. Perhaps you know all of the verse, or only a part of it, but you do not know the reference.

Choose a key word from the words you remember of the verse, and look up that word. It is possible that you will find among the references listed one with a phrase from the verse you are seeking.

For example, suppose you want to find in the Bible the verse that says "*The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.*" Perhaps the only words of the verse you remember are "*money is the root of all evil.*" Notice that there are three key words that you can look up: **money**, **root**, and **evil**. The key word is usually identified in the concordance by only the first letter of the word.

If you do not find in the concordance the Bible reference you are looking for, by looking under the word **money**, proceed to look up the other key words. The reference will eventually bring up 1Timothy 6:10.

Does your Bible have marginal references and a concordance? These are important helps for teachers, ministers, preachers, and others who want to work for God. Perhaps you do not intend to be a minister, preacher or teacher; you can still learn many new things if you will use your study references and a concordance.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: BIBLE STUDY METHODS

LESSON 4: METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

There are 3 key methods of studying the Bible:

- a) The Biographical Method
- b) The Topical Method, and
- c) The Devotional Method

There are other methods people use but these 3 are the most common and popular.

4.1 Biographical Method of Bible Study

Biography is the study of someone's life as written by someone else.

Characters of the Bible were real people. Yet somehow they often seem less real than the people we see every day. You have never seen them. You meet them only in the pages of a book. Your life is probably very different from theirs.

Archaeologists dig up bones of those who lived long ago; they find artefacts (tools and utensils used by people) which help us imagine what life was like hundreds (or thousands) of years ago. But this is still the dim past and is difficult to accept as real.

How can we get to know people of the Bible better?

How can we really learn from the mistakes they made?

How can we profit from their godly lives so that we too can inherit the promises they inherited?

How can we come to appreciate them as real although they were imperfect human beings like us?

Bible Biography or Studying the people of the Bible is a good way to find the answers.

4.1.1 Introduction to Bible Biography

In Matthew 8:11, Jesus made the following statements to a crowd of people, *"And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven"*. On another occasion, Jesus told the unbelieving

Sadducees that God said, *"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"* (Matthew 22:32). He is the God of the living, not of the dead.

Since this lesson is about the **biographical** method of Bible study, we will be studying about the lives of Bible people as they lived long ago. One way to help think of Bible people as **real** people is to consider some Bible facts.

Let's see an example of Abraham:

In John 8, Jesus was giving facts about Himself to unbelieving Pharisees. He told them that He was the **light of the world** and that He **came from above**. He told them many things they did not want to hear. *(Read the whole of John 8 and especially verses 31 to 59, to get the full debate between Jesus Christ and the Pharisees about Abraham).*

The Pharisees boasted to Jesus that they belonged to the family descended from Abraham. Jesus showed them that while they were Abraham's physical descendants, they were not really Abraham's children *(verses 33-39)*. Finally, in verse 58, he said to them, *"Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."* He claimed in this statement that He existed long before Abraham was born. They were clearly unhappy with this assertion and accused Jesus Christ of being a demon for making such claims. Eventually, they tried to stone Him.

In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus revealed a little more about the activities of Abraham after his physical death. In the story, Jesus actually named the people involved. In this account, Jesus told of a conversation between Abraham and an unbelieving rich man who saw the beggar Lazarus being entertained by Abraham at a feast.

So, as one study a person like Abraham in the Bible, one needs to keep in mind that there is more to the story!

Moses and Elijah may be physically dead but they are alive. Hundreds of years after they left the earth, they were seen talking with Jesus on a mountain *(Matthew 17:1-6; Luke 9:28-36)*.

As one study about Moses and Elijah from the Bible, remember also that there is more to the story!

Hebrews 11 gives many snapshot life stories of Old Testament believers who lived and died in faith. These were real people. More to their story can be found in several passages of Scripture.

No book could contain the accounts of all the life stories that started on earth and are continuing in heaven. Hebrews 12:22-24 tells us that such people are still alive in heaven, the Paradise of God.

As believers, we are already citizens of that great community! With these facts in mind;

- i) We should learn how to study about those people of the Bible
- ii) We should learn faith from their faith;

- iii) We should learn from their earthly experiences as God intends for us to do;
- iv) We should follow in their footsteps to inherit eternal life as they have!

4.1.2 Kinds of Biography

Biographical information is in Scripture because of specific purposes the authors had in mind. 2Timothy 3:16 teaches that all Scripture is useful. God inspired the writers to include information that He intends should be included.

There are four basic reasons why biblical authors included biographical information in Scripture.

A. Simple Narrative

The first reason is *simply to list the facts as a matter of record*. This is called *simple narrative*. It is simply telling the facts in story form. This is a common kind of biographical information found in Scripture, and it can be readily studied with reference to many different Bible characters.

B. Narrative Exposition

The second reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information is to use the narrative (the story of a person's life) as *a means of teaching a historical lesson*. In this case, the facts are more than a simple record. They are there to teach.

The entire span of the person's life is studied, with special attention given to the way God's dealings in his life affect his nation. When teaching a historical lesson is the purpose of the biographical information, the story of the person being studied becomes incidental to the main theme of God's interest and care for His own people. There are fewer examples of this kind of biography to study because the number of people with crucial roles in history is limited. However, people like Daniel, Paul, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph and others can be included in this group.

C. Character Exposition (1Corinthians 10:1-12)

The third reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information may be to *teach character*. This is closely related to narrative exposition, but with a different slant. In this case the author is primarily interested in presenting the facts as they relate to the spiritual progress and character of the person being studied.

The kings of Israel and Judah lend themselves to this kind of study. The details of their lives are given in a very thorough manner along with God's pronouncements about them. These pronouncements are praise in some cases and stern condemnation in others. Many Bible people can be used for this type of study: disciples, prophets, and godly people from many walks of life whose stories are included in Scripture (Examples are Sampson, Moses, Daniel, etc)

Character exposition is written for the purpose of exploring a person's character and spiritual development. Therefore, it should be organized around categories related to character. The main topics might be centred on decisions made by the individual which were clues to his character.

Subtopics under those major decisions might be personal influences or environmental influences that had a bearing on the decisions.

Other headings might be his dominant personal traits, his major accomplishments, his religious experiences, and clues that might be found in his relationships with other people.

D. Argument (*John 20:30-31; Luke 1:1-4*)

The fourth (and least common) reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information in Scripture is *to prove a point*. The facts of the individual's life are used to convince someone of something. Occasionally you will see this aim in evidence in the gospels concerning the life of Jesus, or in Paul's writings.

4.1.3 Summary of Biography

The basic steps for any kind of biographical study will be the same.

For any of the four types of biographical study one must read, observe, and make notes. Then, outline the notes to help interpret the information collected.

For a *simple narrative*, cite the facts as a matter of record. The main points of outline might be:

- a) Birth and Early Life
- b) Conversion and Ministry
- c) Relationships with Others
- d) Character Evaluation
- e) End of Life Experiences and Death
- f) Author's Purpose for Writing

Subtopics and details would be organized around this framework. One might not find facts for each of these categories available, but it's important to use whatever one could find.

The outline for the other types of biographical study will follow the same pattern. The emphasis will be different.

In an *argument*, one will seek to understand what point the author was trying to prove. What was he trying to convince someone of? Who was he trying to convince?

In a *character exposition*, the person's spiritual life and influence on others will be the main focus, and the rest of the information will be incidental.

Sometimes the same person is mentioned in more than one Bible book. In that case you almost need to have access to a Bible *concordance* to find all the information. A Bible concordance lists words of the Bible in alphabetical order, along with places in Scripture where each word listed is used. If you do not have a concordance, you will have to use the book method. That is, get all the information that is given in one book and build your study around that.

4.2 Topical Method of Bible Study

In Romans 1:20 we find a relationship between the visible and invisible qualities which are valuable to topical Bible study: *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse!"*

This Scripture explains that God created the very nature that surrounds us, with the intent that we could learn about Him through our observation of it.

The early and latter rains which water the crops of Palestine are the autumn rains (early) and spring rains (latter). These rains are used as significant illustrations in Scripture. (See Proverbs 16:15, Zechariah 10:1, James 5:7.)

Any topic that is treated or mentioned in the Bible is a possible topic to study. This would include not only such things as *clothing, housing, foods*, etc. but also *words*; that is, how certain key words are used in Scripture. Your study would include themes such as *faith, prayer, the second coming of Christ*, and topics concerning Christian living.

There will be great differences in the amount of information available about various topics in the Bible. For some, there may be enough information in just a chapter or a passage. For others, it may be necessary to glean information from many books in both Testaments to get the fullest possible meaning from the study. The more comprehensive the study is, the longer it will take. The length of a topical study will depend on the amount of information to be found and the amount of time one wishes to spend on it.

A long, complete study is made much easier if one has access to a Bible concordance or a Bible dictionary. Bible software is also available to speed up searches. In these concordances and dictionaries, words and topics mentioned in the Bible are listed in alphabetical order along with their Scripture references. These allow one to save time in finding all the places where a topic is mentioned.

However, topical studies can be done without such helps. In fact, it is better in shorter topical studies to do your own reading and searching for occurrences of the topic you wish to investigate. This is true because in doing so, you will not only find *Direct* references to the topics, but *Indirect* references as well.

Direct references are those which actually contain the specific word or phrase you are looking for.

Indirect references are those which refer to the theme or general idea of your topic. These *Indirect references* are important for a more complete understanding of your topic.

There are two types of Topical study:

- a) Theological study;
- b) Nature study

4.2.1 Theological Study

An example of a topic for Theological study could be *The Nature of God*. Typical references for this topic could be Habakkuk 1:2, 12, 13; 2:1, 13-14, 20; 3:3, 5-6, 13, 18-19.

These passages reveal the nature of God as being personal, holy, and righteous. He is supreme in power, fair in judgment, and patient in His administration of justice, and He is the Saviour.

It is important to write down qualities or observations from each verse that you read in order to build a picture or an outline of the subject or topic under consideration.

This example of *The Nature of God*, deals with a topic that is a *quality* rather than a *thing*. Additional qualities that can be investigated are hope, love, faith, forgiveness, repentance, and eternal life.

4.2.2 Nature Study

A typical example that one can chose for Nature study is the *sparrow*. This small bird is representative of the many topics of interest that can be found in the area of nature. It can be a study to illustrate how much God cares for us (*Matthew 10:29-31*) or an illustration of sorrow and loneliness (*Psalms 102:7*).

You can check for translations, meanings and various usages of the topic.

Plants, animals and minerals are sometimes used in the Bible as *illustrations* and sometimes as *symbols*.

An *illustration* of a truth pictures that truth in a way which makes it easier to understand. The *mustard plant* is an example of such an illustration. Because the mustard plant is known for growing an unusually large plant from a very small seed, Jesus used it to illustrate truth about the Kingdom of Heaven (*Matthew 13:31-32*) and faith (*Matthew 17:20*).

A *symbol* is something that stands for something else. A symbol has one or more qualities that are reminders of the object it stands for. For example, in Daniel 2 the "head of gold" was revealed to be a symbol of King Nebuchadnezzar himself (verse 38). In Daniel 8:1-8, a ram and a goat were used as symbols of kingdoms and kings who were to come.

In addition to those already mentioned in this lesson, some possible topics from nature might include light, water, grain, herbs (such as cumin, Matthew 23:23) and many others.

4.2.3 Procedures for Topical Method of Study

1. List occurrences of a topic or information about it
2. Classify them into categories – historical, nature, theology, moral, sacrifices, etc
3. Examine the context in which they are used
4. Summarize each category
5. Compare each summary statement. What can you learn from them?
6. Summarise the entire outline study. What stood out for you in the study? etc

4.3 Devotional Method of Bible Study

To have an idea of devotional study, let's imagine a tired, hungry traveller in a desolate place who finds a beautiful tree, filled with delicious fruit. His one desire is to eat a piece of the fruit, to be nourished and refreshed by it. After he has eaten, he may now consider finding out more about the tree itself. He may note where it is growing, the shape of its leaves and branches, its colour and fragrance.

No matter how much he satisfies his curiosity about the lovely tree itself, it is his eating of the fruit that satisfies his hunger and nourishes his body.

So it is with God's Word, the Bible. Every aspect of it is fascinating. No human mind can ever reach the depths or the heights of it because, like its Author, it is eternal and infinite. New aspects of familiar verses will continue to unfold as long as you study Scripture. Like the beautiful tree and its fruit, the part of the Scripture that you *eat*, is the part that nourishes and satisfies you.

How can one *eat* Scripture? You begin by reading it, and doing more than that. You must internalize it through *devotional study*. You must make its teachings your own. When you do this, Scripture becomes your spiritual food and gives you spiritual life. Jesus said, "*The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life*" (John 6:63).

Other methods of Bible study are very much intellectual exercises, and should be more than that. As you become aware of the *devotional attitude*, and each time you enter into the study of Scripture with an open heart, you will find that it speaks to you personally.

There are really no new techniques to present in this lesson. Devotional study is accomplished by combining all the tools and skills learnt so far. However, there will always be two aspects of this study; the *textual* and *spiritual*. What this means is that the text that you read in the Bible should produce spiritual growth and nourishment within, leading to spiritual maturity.

4.3.1 Purpose of Devotional Study

The important thing to learn is *Purpose*.

The main purpose of devotional Bible study is

- a) To personally feed upon God's Word, allowing it to become life to you;
- b) To seek the mind of God;
- c) To listen to the voice of God;
- d) To pursue the will of God;
- e) To rest in His holy presence in praise and worship.

This is accomplished by using every possible means to understanding what the Scriptures are saying, and then responding to the Lord in loving obedience.

Devotional study should be a part of every Christian's daily activity. It is intensely personal. While there may be times when a devotional study is prepared to be shared with others, its main purpose remains personal. What is the Holy Spirit saying to me? Devotional study will help find the answer.

Because Christians have an enemy who tries to keep them from knowing and doing God's will, you may find more hindrances to your study when you are studying in this manner.

Peter warns in 1Peter 5:8-9 saying;

"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world."

4.3.2 Devotional Method of study by Text

The text for devotional Bible study can be a *word*, a *verse*, a *paragraph*, or a *longer segment* of Scripture.

a) Word Study

A devotional study should not be based on just one word because such a study would require access to reference materials which could give further insight into the ways specific words are used in the original Greek and Hebrew texts.

Devotional studies should be based on a verse, a paragraph, and a longer segment.

b) Verse and Chapter Study

Verse and chapter divisions are not found in the original Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible. Scripture has traditionally been divided that way by translators to break up the text into smaller portions for better understanding. Once in a while you may find that the first verse of one chapter would fit better if it were the last verse of the previous chapter, or vice versa. The choice of just where to begin and end the chapters was made several centuries ago.

The great convenience of having Scripture divided into easy-to-handle sections far outweighs any problem about which verse should end the chapter! You always are free to start or stop your study at any logical place. Just be sure that your starting or stopping does not alter the meaning of the passage. Include all the words that make the thought complete.

Example of Devotional Study of a Verse:

In devotional study, heart attitude is more important than intellectual technique. Also, methodical study is more valuable than random or haphazard study. A good Bible scholar will combine right attitude of heart with best method of study. You will be responding to God's Word to feed your spirit, and you will bring to bear all you have learned about Bible study.

There are three convenient steps in making a devotional study. The steps are:
Choose the Text, Observe the Facts, Interpret the Facts.

i) Choose the Text

The first step is to decide on the verse to be studied. You will rely heavily on the Holy Spirit to direct your attention to His Word for *you* at that particular time.

This reliance is difficult to explain to anyone because it is so personal. But if you are a Christian and you spend time with the Word of God, you probably are aware of the way the Holy Spirit quickens your mind to certain Scriptures. Each person's experience can be expressed such as, *"the letters just seemed to jump off the page."* The Holy Spirit has His own special way of attracting one's attention if one seeks Him for guidance in the study of the Word.

So, one way to choose a verse is to pay close attention to a given passage of Scripture. You may be especially drawn to a verse as you read. Any time you read the Bible, make a note of verses that are interesting to you. The verses that lend themselves to devotional study are those which contain *directions to follow* or *warnings to heed*.

What if you receive no "special" guidance? Does that mean you should not study the Word? By no means! "All Scripture is inspired by God. So, if you are not drawn especially to any verse, just choose one that contains directions to follow or warnings to heed.

ii) Observe the Facts

The second step is to read the verse thoughtfully many times. As you read, think this question to yourself: *"If I had to give this verse a three or four word title, what would it be?"*

By thinking of a title for the verse, you will grasp the main idea in it. When you have the main idea of the verse, read it through and *list all the facts you can find in it*. Look for facts that are either *directly stated* or *implied* by this verse.

Look for answers to the following 5 "W" questions:

WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE?

Note that you will not be able to find answers to all five of these questions in every verse you study. Make a note of the names of things, the action words, *the words that describe things*. All of these observations should be written in your notebook.

iii) Interpret the Facts

The third step is to interpret the verse by writing the meaning of it in your own words. By doing this, you will be answering the question that is the key to interpretation:

“What does this mean?”

“What does this mean to *me*?” – (You make the question personal to you.)

In preparing a devotional study you will be more interested in finding truth to feed your spirit than in technical matters.

c) Paragraphs

Usually, modern translators include not only chapter and verse division but also divide the Scripture into paragraphs. A *paragraph* is grouping together of sentences that relate to the same main topic. The first line of that group of sentences, in most Bibles, is often *indented* or demarcated by spacing, or a started with a bold verse number, to show transition from one thought to another. A paragraph is a convenient unit to study.

These small “bites” of Scripture will be important to devotional study. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He quoted the Scripture which says, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*” (Matthew 4:4). Jesus was quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3. This is an example of an intense study of small portions of Scripture as though looking at them under a microscope.

Example of Devotional Study of a Paragraph:

Devotional study of a paragraph is very similar to devotional study of a verse.

For a chosen paragraph, firstly read each verse carefully.

Secondly, observe the facts. That is, reread as many times as necessary to find answers to the five *fact* questions:

WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE?

Note the verbs or actions, the statements of truth, the commands and warnings.

When you begin to clearly understand the message of the paragraph, write a three or four word title for the paragraph.

The third step will be interpretation. It will include the writing in your own words of a statement of meaning on the paragraph. This statement will bring all your observations and interpretations together in a unified whole.

d) Longer segments

Sometimes you may want to use longer segments such as several paragraphs or more than one chapter. The length of the text is not as important as the “listening heart.”

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SUBJECT: BIBLE SURVEY

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Read 2Timothy 3:14-17; 2Peter 1:15-21; Psalms 119:96-105

Introduction

How did God give us the Bible? Was it written by angels and left somewhere waiting for someone to find it? Or did someone spend his lifetime studying and searching that he might finally give us his philosophies?

God did not choose any of these avenues to give us His Word. Instead, He used ordinary men from many walks of life and over a span of hundreds of years to give us the Book we call the Bible. The agreement and harmony with which these men wrote stand as a testimony to God, who never changes.

The way the Bible was written is a miracle. Its preservation is another miracle. One of the prophets told how the king took the book of prophecies, threw it into the fire, and burned it. But, the Lord told the prophet to take another scroll and write everything again (Jeremiah 36:27-28). God's Word can never be destroyed. (Matthew 5:17-19)

In this lesson, we will study facts about the Bible – who was used in the writing of it, how one part of the Bible relates to another, and how it all relates to us. As we get better acquainted with the Book, we will appreciate and study it more.

The Bible tells us of God's love for us. In it God gives us instructions on how to live, and promises that someday we will live with Him for eternity. In studying the Bible, we not only learn of God's plans for our future but also of His promises for the present.

Origin of the Bible

The Holy Bible is like a small library of 66 books that God has given us. We call it the Bible, the Scriptures, or the Word of God.

The word *Bible* means "books." *Holy* means "something we respect because it belongs to God." Each of the 66 books of the Bible is holy.

Authors and Inspiration

Approximately forty men were divinely inspired to write the Bible. Some of these men wrote more than one book. A few books were not signed by their authors, so we do not know who wrote them.

The term *divinely inspired* means the Holy Spirit gave the authors the thoughts and words God wanted them to write. The Bible tells us in 2Timothy 3:16 that all Scripture is inspired by God. These writers could not have consulted each other about their work because they did not all live at the same time. The first books were written about 1500 years before Christ, and the last was written about 100 years after Christ. Because these books of the Bible were inspired by God, we call them holy.

Among the authors were kings and fishermen, politicians, military and religious leaders, peasants, merchants, and poets. Even though they came from different places, with various interests and backgrounds, they all wrote about the same theme because God inspired them. This theme is the relationship between God and humanity. Such order throughout all of the books, without contradictions, was possible because the Bible has only one principal author – God – who spoke through different men.

The following verse is important to memorize:

Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2Peter 1:21)

General Structure of the Bible

When two people or two nations want to make a special agreement, they can write a *treaty* or a *pact*. Once the treaty is signed, it must not be broken. The word *testament* means treaty, pact, or covenant.

The Bible is divided into two Testaments – the Old and the New. These are the pacts God has made with humankind.

The Old Testament was given to the Jews, who were also called Hebrews or Israelites. God chose them to receive His truths, write them, and teach them to others. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew because it was the language of the Jews.

The Old Testament covers the history and terms of God's relationship with humanity, from Creation to the coming of the Saviour who would establish a new covenant.

The New Testament gives the history and the conditions of the new covenant, or pact, that God has made with all who accept His Son Jesus Christ as their Saviour. The New Testament tells the story of the life of Jesus Christ, and also what He taught.

When the New Testament was written, Greek was a commonly known language. Since this new pact was for all people – not for the Jews alone – the New Testament was written in Greek, thus making it possible for most people to read it.

The Relationship of The Testaments

The Old Testament is very important because it reveals God's plan for humanity. But the Old Testament was a temporary pact until Jesus Christ would come to establish the permanent pact. We are now living under the new pact – the New Testament.

The New Testament is based upon the Old Testament. It not only explains the relationship between the two pacts, but it relates the fulfilment of many Old Testament prophecies.

For example, the Old Testament book of Micah 5:2, it indicates that the Saviour would be born in the Jewish town of Bethlehem.

Matthew 2:1, in the New Testament, tells us Jesus the Saviour was born in Bethlehem.

Psalms 22:18 in the Old Testament prophesies that men would gamble for and divide the Saviour's garments among themselves. When Jesus was dying on the cross, the soldiers took His clothes.

Matthew 27:35 says, "When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots."

There are hundreds of other examples. Special books have been compiled which give all of the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in the New Testament.

It is wonderful that a book as ancient as the Old Testament was preserved for so many years. We should be grateful to God's chosen people who received God's Word, preserved it, and shared it with other nations.

Different Translations of the Bible

God's desire is that every person should accept Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour (2Peter 3:9). Since this is God's desire, we know He wants everyone to understand His Word. This is why the Old Testament was written in Hebrew for the Jews, and the New Testament was written in Greek for the larger world population of that time.

Today, since most of us do not understand Hebrew or Greek, we would have a difficult time understanding the Scriptures if they were not translated into our language. This is why we study the Bible, teach it, translate it, and publish it.

There are Bible societies that are always working on new translations. As of 2005, there are approximately 7000 distinct languages spoken in the world. Complete Bibles exist in 422 of them. The New Testament has been translated into almost 1100 languages. Over 1600 other translation projects are in process.

When a new translation is completed, there is much rejoicing because another group of people are able to read the Scriptures in their own language. There are still thousands of languages into which the Bible has not yet been translated. It is the more reason why we need to pray that those who do this work will have strength to continue their great task.

Different Versions of the Bible

Sometimes there is more than one translation of the Bible in a particular language because languages change. When a translation becomes outdated and a bit difficult to understand, it needs revision. Older words are replaced by newer words – words used in everyday speech.

Making a new version is not an attempt to change the meaning or the teachings of the Bible. All versions—old and new—are the same Bible. The translators have tried to give us the exact meaning that was in the original Greek or Hebrew copies.

The most popular of the English versions for many years was the King James Version. The English, however, is several centuries old and sometimes difficult to understand. Today, many enjoy reading the New International Version or the New King James Version or the KiSwahili Bible.

Some readers find the contemporary language easier to understand, while others still prefer the richness of the old versions.

The Apocrypha

Catholic versions of the Bible include the Apocrypha, a number of books of doubtful origin. Though these books contain some historical information, especially about the 400 year period between the Old and New Testaments, not all their historical data are accurate. Because they lack evidence of divine inspiration, they were not accepted as part of the Jewish sacred writings, which make up the Old Testament.

The collection of books was named *Apocrypha*, from a Greek word meaning “hidden things.” They were considered as being beyond the ability of the average person to understand and appreciate—whereas Scripture is given for us all to profit by and enjoy.

God wants everyone to be saved and “to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1Timothy 2:4).

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: BIBLE SURVEY

LESSON 2: OLD TESTAMENT

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: -

Reading the Old Testament may seem like reading any other ancient history book, but the Old Testament is much more than just a history book. It contains God's covenant relationships with His chosen nation, Israel. It also contains the history of Creation and stories of the Jewish nation.

Prophecies have been carefully recorded, some with their fulfilment and others yet to take place. The books also contain love stories, poems, songs, and proverbs in rich variety.

We can count on history books to tell us about their heroes, but the Old Testament includes the common folk of their day. These stories are no less important, for they give us a clear picture of God's dealings with His people.

The books of the Old Testament can be divided into five major themes or classifications.

Old Testament Classifications

The 39 books of the Old Testament are grouped as follows:

Law	-	5 books
History	-	12 books
Poetry	-	5 books
Major Prophets		5 books
Minor Prophets		12 books

LAW	HISTORY	POETRY	MAJOR PROPHETS	MINOR PROPHETS
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Ruth 1Samuel 2Samuel 1Kings 2Kings 1Chronicles 2Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Songs of Solomon	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

The prophets are designated as being either major or minor. The classification has little to do with content, as all the books are important. The major prophetic books (with the exception of Lamentations) are longer; the minor books are shorter.

Explaining the Classifications

1. The Law

The first 5 books of the Bible are known as the books of the Law or the Books of Moses. They are also called the Pentateuch, which means “five books.” The Pentateuch was written by Moses, the great leader and liberator of the Jewish people. The Pentateuch highlights God’s dealings with humanity for an estimated period of 2500 years. It lays the foundation for the story of redemption.

Genesis means “beginning” or “origin.” The book of Genesis tells of the Creation, the origin of humankind, the Flood, and the call of Abraham.

Exodus means, “going out.” This book tells how God led His people out of slavery, opening the Red Sea before them and providing for their needs. The book of Exodus contains the Ten Commandments and laws for the nation.

Leviticus takes its name from Levi, the priestly tribe. This book gives instruction for the priests and the offering of sacrifices – looking forward to Christ who would become the sin offering for the whole world.

Numbers records the numbering of the people. Recording the census was important to the young nation about to possess the land that was promised to their father Abraham.

Deuteronomy means “second law.” The book contains further instructions for God’s people, Moses’ farewell address, and his commission to Joshua who would assume leadership after Moses’ death.

2. History

The 12 books of History give the history of the Jewish nation. They tell of God’s dealings with individuals and with the nation as a whole. They add up to about a third of the Old Testament.

Joshua, the general who led the Hebrew people after the death of Moses, went on to conquer the land of Canaan. The book of Joshua is about that conquest. There were, however, a number of small kingdoms and cities that tried to fight back.

Judges covers 400 years of defeats and victories in Canaan: defeat when the people forgot God, victory when they repented and God raised up judges as deliverers.

The book of *Ruth* tells of a dedicated girl from the land of Moab who lived in the time of the judges. She became the great-grandmother of David and one of the ancestors of Jesus.

First & Second Samuel take their names from Samuel, the last of the judges. He was also a priest, prophet, educator, and statesman who played an important role in his nation becoming an established kingdom.

First & Second Kings and First & Second Chronicles continue the nation's history and tell how it became divided into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The Chronicles also contain genealogies important to the Hebrew people.

God used *Ezra*, a priest, and *Nehemiah*, a cupbearer, to lead the Hebrews back home after their captivity in Babylon. These two men helped rebuild the nation. God also inspired Ezra to write and to gather the sacred books that made up the Old Testament. He had copies made of the Scriptures so the people could read them.

The book of *Esther* tells how God used a beautiful Jewish girl to save her people from being massacred during the captivity.

3. Poetry

Many of the books of the Bible contain poetical passages. Hebrew poetry often differs from other poetry in both style and structure. Through this poetry, we see God's heart toward His people and their response to Him.

Five books, however, are grouped under the books of Poetry.

Job is a dramatic poem about the sufferings and eventual reward of a righteous man. This book is believed to be the oldest in the Bible.

Psalms is the hymn book and prayer book of the Bible. These poems were collected and used by the people of Israel in their worship. Though David and other leaders wrote many of the Psalms, a number of them are of unknown origin.

Solomon, a son of David and the third king of Israel, was the wisest man who ever lived. He wrote and compiled *Proverbs* to teach young people how to live successfully. *Proverbs* is one of the "books of wisdom."

Ecclesiastes is Solomon's testimony of how empty life is without God. Pleasures, riches, accomplishments, and power cannot satisfy. Humanity was created to serve God.

Songs of Solomon is like an opera, a dramatic song. It tells of the love between bride and groom and symbolizes God's love for His people.

4. Major Prophets

When God wanted to communicate directly with His people, He often used chosen men known as prophets. These prophets proclaimed God's message either by the spoken or written word.

The books in this classification are called Major Prophets because of the length of the books, the long ministry, and great influence of these prophets.

Isaiah was both a prince in Israel and a great prophet who lived during the time that Babylon was establishing its empire. He foretold the captivity of the Hebrew nation, but also brought a message of hope. Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, Isaiah foretold Jesus' virgin birth, His death for our sins, and His resurrection.

Jeremiah also wrote about the Babylonian captivity and told that the Jews would return to their homeland after 70 years. Cyrus' decree allowing the Jews to go back to Palestine came just as Jeremiah had predicted (see Jeremiah 25:11).

Jeremiah saw many prophecies fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. He describes this in five mournful poems called *Lamentations*.

Ezekiel was one of the major prophets of the exile. He prophesied to the Hebrews during their 70 years of captivity in Babylon.

Daniel, a captive Hebrew prince, became the prime minister of the Babylonian empire. His accurate predictions of the rise and fall of empires are amazing. Many of them have already been fulfilled, and some are being fulfilled in our lifetime.

5. Minor Prophets

The twelve books of the Minor Prophets together do not equal in length the book of Isaiah. But these men loved God and valiantly proclaimed His message to people who were often indifferent or rebellious toward God. The first 9 of these prophets lived before the captivity; the others lived after the Jews' return to their homeland. Each book bears its author's name.

Hosea preached of God's love for His people as that of a husband for an unfaithful wife. Hosea illustrated it by forgiving his own unfaithful wife.

Joel prophesied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost and in the charismatic revival of these last days.

Amos was a shepherd whom God sent to the capital of Israel to preach against social injustice. He warned the people of coming judgment against sin.

Obadiah prophesied of judgment against the country of Edom. Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. We know very little about the prophet himself.

God sent *Jonah* as a missionary to Nineveh, but Jonah tried to run away by sailing to another city. After being swallowed by a big fish, he repented, was delivered, and then obeyed God.

Micah lived at the same time as Isaiah and Hosea. He prophesied destruction of the Hebrew nation, but also gave hope for their future. He spoke of the Saviour and even mentioned the town where Jesus would be born (see Micah 5:2).

Nahum prophesied the destruction of Nineveh, the great city that had repented under Jonah's preaching. But when the people turned again to their wickedness, God said He would destroy the city.

Habakkuk and *Zephaniah* warned of national defeat and captivity if the people did not repent. The people clung to their sins and entered Babylon as captives.

After the return from Babylon to Palestine, God used *Haggai* and *Zechariah* to encourage the rebuilding of the temple.

Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, lived 400 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Read in Malachi 3:8-12 his message on tithing.

So ends the record of God's dealing with His people under the old covenant while they waited for the coming of Christ and His new pact.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: BIBLE SURVEY

LESSON 3: NEW TESTAMENT

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: -

At the time the New Testament was being written, the Old Testament picture had changed very much. The days of the prophets were gone, and many people were indifferent to spiritual things. Like the rest of the Near East and Europe, the Jewish nation came under Roman rule. Though it was a difficult time for the Jewish people and they longed for freedom, outside influence did offer some benefits. A strong Roman army saw to it that roads were safe for commerce, and increased travel allowed Greek culture with its music and art to spread throughout the empire.

It was not by chance that God sent His Son to the world at this time. The Greeks furnished a common language for communicating the gospel and the Romans gave reasonable protection and liberties for evangelism.

The New Testament is the story of the life of Christ and the beginning of Christianity. The New Testament books contain instructions and promises for all believers, prophecies concerning the future, and the hope of eternal life with Christ.

Read these books to learn their truths firsthand.

New Testament Classifications

In Lesson 2, we learned that the Old Testament has 5 major classifications. The New Testament also has 5 classifications.

The 27 books of the New Testament are grouped as follows:

Gospels	-	4 books
History	-	1 book
General Epistles	-	8 books
Pauline Epistles	-	13 books
Prophecy	-	1 book

GOSPELS	HISTORY	GENERAL EPISTLES	PAULINE EPISTLES	PROPHECY
Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts of the Apostles	Hebrews James 1Peter 2Peter 1John 2John 3John Jude	Romans 1Corinthians 2Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1Thessalonians 2Thessalonians 1Timothy 2Timothy Titus Philemon	Revelations

Explaining the Classifications

1. The Gospels

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote the life of Christ in the Gospels that bear their names. These writers are sometimes called the Four Evangelists. Each has a different focus or emphasis.

The first three Gospels are called “synoptic” as they give a synopsis or a complete view of Jesus’ life. They are similar in their choice of events to relate. John, however, does not emphasize the history of Jesus as much as His sayings and teachings.

Matthew presents Jesus as King, or Messiah. Quoting the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah (the name the Jews gave to their expected king or deliverer), Matthew shows how Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures.

Mark wrote to the Romans, most of whom did not know the Scriptures. He filled his gospel with dynamic action as he showed his readers that Jesus came as the Servant of God.

Luke, a physician, wrote his Gospel for a Greek friend. He emphasized Christ’s perfect manhood, presenting Him as the Son of Man.

John gives evidence to show that Jesus is the Son of God and that those who believe on Him have eternal life.

2. History

Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles to tell how Christ sent the Holy Spirit to continued His work on earth after Christ went back to heaven.

Apostle means “sent” or “one who is sent.” Acts tells how the sent ones of the Lord took the gospel to their world.

One of the main persons in the book of Acts is Paul. He was the apostle to the Gentiles. Gentiles were people who were not Jews. Luke went with Paul on some trips and told of their exciting missionary adventures. He tells of how the Holy Spirit used Paul to start the Christian church in many countries.

The key text is Acts 1:8. Every Christian should memorize it: *"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"* (Acts 1:8).

3. Pauline Epistles

The 13 Pauline Epistles are letters Paul wrote, some of them to churches he had founded. The book of Hebrews was not signed, so we cannot say definitely that Paul wrote it. Most scholars do not feel he did, so we are not including Hebrews in the list of Paul's Epistles.

Since there were no printing presses, the Epistles were passed from church to church. It is possible that at each place the members made a copy to keep and study.

Romans has been called "the cathedral of Christian doctrine" because of its clear, powerful explanation of salvation. Justification by faith is its theme.

Paul wrote *1 & 2 Corinthians* to the church he had founded in Corinth. These letters addressed problems of doctrine and conduct in the church.

The next Epistle, *Galatians*, has the same theme as *Romans*—justification by faith. It emphasizes that no one can save himself or herself by good works, only by faith in Jesus Christ.

While Paul was in jail for preaching the gospel, he wrote *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, and *Colossians*. These Epistles, called "prison Epistles," are about living the Christian life.

Both letters to the *Thessalonians* tell what will happen just before Jesus returns from heaven. You can read about His return in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.

Four of Paul's Epistles are to individuals. The two letters to *Timothy* and the one to *Titus* are especially helpful to pastors.

Just before Paul gave his life for the cause of Christ, he wrote his last letter to Timothy, charging him to be faithful in God's work. Read 2 Timothy 4:5–8.

Onesimus, Philemon's runaway slave, was saved while he was in jail with Paul. Paul wrote asking *Philemon* to forgive Onesimus and receive him as a brother in Christ.

4. General Epistles

The Pauline Epistles carry the names of the persons to whom they are addressed, but the general Epistles go by the names of the ones who wrote them. Since Hebrews was

an unnamed book, early editors assumed the audience was the Hebrew people. The early church then adopted the name Hebrews for this epistle.

Even though *Hebrews* has been included in the New Testament from the days of the early church, scholars today are somewhat divided on who actually wrote the epistle. Authorship has been traditionally ascribed either to Paul or Barnabas—both of whom were capable of providing this material. Although we are not certain of the authorship, no question should exist as to the book's divine inspiration and usefulness for the body of Christ.

The key word of Hebrews is "better." This letter to Hebrew Christians reminded them that the new covenant is better than the old. Hebrews shows how the symbolic rites and sacrifices under the Law were pictures of Jesus, who became our high priest and the supreme sacrifice for our sins.

James, author of the book that bears his name, was pastor of the church in Jerusalem. This James was also probably the brother of Jesus. James, John's brother, had already been beheaded.

James teaches that living faith in Christ will produce good works. Our works do not save us. But if we are saved, we are expected to do what we can for God and His people.

Peter's letters of encouragement for suffering Christians remind them that the Lord will come back someday and reward them for their faithfulness.

John, the beloved disciple, lived the longest of the twelve. He wrote a gospel and three Epistles bearing his name. The theme of God's love that makes us love one another carries through all his writings. He also wrote Revelation, the book that reveals Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jude, the last Epistle, was written by a brother of James and probably also a brother of Jesus. He warns the reader against false teachings and speaks of Jesus' return to judge the world.

5. Prophecy

The book of *Revelation* is also called the Apocalypse because it unveils the future. Its symbolic visions are similar to those in the book of Daniel. John, the author, was an old man in exile on the island of Patmos when he was given visions of the last days of this age, of heaven, and of the coming kingdom of God.

Though John had known Jesus when He carried out His earthly ministry, he saw Jesus again as the mighty conqueror. John saw Jesus as the one who holds all authority (Revelation 1:18).

As the revelation of Christ changed Patmos into the doorway of heaven for John, it also brings light into our darkness, joy into our lives, and hope into a chaotic world.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: **CHRISTIAN CHARACTER**

LESSON 1: **INTRODUCTION & DEFINITIONS**

COURSE TEACHER: **BISHOP EKONG**

Introduction: - Colossians 3:1-25; Ephesians 4:1-3, 17-32; 5:1-33; Galatians 5:16-26; Romans 5:1-5

Character is defined as a person's mental and moral qualities which distinguishes the person from others. It is the distinctive nature, uniqueness, reputation and moral strength of a person.

When we become Christians through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we took on the nature of God, which defines His character and personality (2Corinthians 5:17). From then on we are expected to grow daily and become more like Jesus as we walk in tune and in obedience to His Word and to His Spirit (1Peter 2:1-3; Galatians 5:16-17, 24-26).

God's desire is that we grow to be more like Jesus in character (2Corinthians 3:18).

As Christians, we have been called to live separate from this world, not physically but morally (Romans 12:1-2; 2Corinthians 6:14-18; 1John 2:15-17). We are a 'called-out' people and a holy nation to the Lord (1Peter 2:9-12). We are to walk worthy of the Lord in righteousness and faith. If we are still consciously living a life of sin, then it questions the sincerity of our faith whether indeed we were born again (1John 3:4-10).

Our character defines what we do and who we are (Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 3:8; 7:17-20; 12:35).

The Holy Spirit has been given to us to help us in our daily walk with God. When we are yielded and fully controlled by the Holy Spirit, He produces God's nature within us, which we often refer to as the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the nine visible attributes of a true Christian life.

A tree is known by its fruit and has only one fruit. The work of the Holy Spirit is known by the fruit that He bears in the life of a believer. The fruit is singular but has 9 parts, which are a manifestation of the nature of God in us. God is love and this love is expressed in various ways as we relate with others and with Him. We can see example of this in 1Corinthians 13:4-7 - Love is kind, good, patient, peaceful, gentle, joyful, faithful and self-controlled.

The fruit of the Spirit is listed as:

1. Love (Agape) - God's kind of love, which is self-giving and unconditional
2. Joy
3. Peace

4. Longsuffering (Patience)
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness (Meekness)
9. Self-control

Let's see how we can discern their manifestation in the life of a believer:

1. Love (Greek: *agape*)

Agape refers to goodwill that always seeks the best of the other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return, and does not consider the worth of its object.

Agape describes the unconditional love God has for the world. According to 1Corinthians 13, *Agape* love is sacrificial, demonstrated by Jesus' death on the cross, does not display itself haughtily. It is not arrogant and inflated with pride; it is not rude. Love does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not resentful; it pays no attention to a suffered wrong. It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, it is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes do not fade under any circumstances. Love never fails.

2. Joy (Greek: *chara*)

The Greek word for 'joy' is *chara*, derived from the word *charis*, which is the Greek word for 'grace.' This is significant to note, because *chara* is produced by the *charis* of God. This means 'joy' is not a human-based happiness that comes and goes but, rather, true 'joy' is divine in its origin. It is a Spirit-given expression that flourishes best in hard times. For example, in 1Thessalonians 1:6, the Thessalonians were under great stress due to persecution; yet in the midst of it all, they continued to experience great joy. Their supernatural joy was due to the Holy Spirit working in them. Paul even called it the "joy of the Holy Spirit".

According to Nehemiah 8:10, "The joy of the Lord is your strength"

3. Peace (Hebrew: *shalom*)

Peace is the result of resting in a relationship with God. Peace is tranquility, a state of rest, which comes from seeking after God, and is the opposite of chaos. Peace is God's gift of wholeness and it is like when all essential parts are joined together as one or as a whole.

The Hebrew word for "peace" is *shalom*, which expresses the idea of *wholeness, completeness, or tranquility in the soul that is unaffected by the outward circumstances or pressures*. When a person is dominated by peace, he has a calm, inner stability that results in the ability to conduct himself peacefully, even in the midst of circumstances that would normally be very nerve-wracking, traumatic, or upsetting. Rather than

allowing the difficulties and pressures of life to break him, a person who is possessed by peace is *whole, complete, orderly, stable, and poised for blessing*.

Jesus is described as the Prince of Peace, who brings peace to the hearts of those who desire it (John 14:27).

Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of God no matter what the conflict.

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

When having peace with God through the sacrifice of Jesus, we are then able to make peace between men, and also between men and God, also called "evangelism." It is understood that those who have peace with God, and are therefore sons of God, will act like their Father in heaven and become those who are able to make peace, or be peace-makers, as Jesus says in Matthew 5:9.

4. Patience

Patience, in some translations is "longsuffering" or "endurance".

The word denotes forbearance, fortitude, patient endurance, longsuffering. It is also the ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment. It describes a person who has the power to exercise revenge but instead exercises restraint.

Endurance: Constancy, perseverance, continuance, bearing up, steadfastness, holding out, patient endurance. It describes the capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances, not with a passive complacency, but with a hopeful fortitude that actively resists weariness and defeat.

Hebrews 10:36 says, "For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." We are "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy" (Colossians 1:11). "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2).

5. Kindness

Kindness does not necessarily mean being nice. One can be kind and not nice. Nice is defined as being agreeable. In contrast, kindness is acting for the good of people regardless of what they do.

Kindness is goodness in action, sweetness of disposition, gentleness in dealing with others, benevolence, friendliness. The word describes *the ability to act for the welfare of those taxing your patience*.

Kindness is doing something and not expecting anything in return. Kindness is respect and helping others without waiting for someone to help one back. It implies kindness no matter what. We should live "in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left" (2Corinthians 6:6-7).

6. Goodness

Goodness means:

1. The state or quality of being good
2. Moral excellence or virtue
3. Kindness or generosity
4. General character recognized in quality or conduct.

Some English Bibles translate the original word in Greek into two English words: kindness and goodness. "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:9). See also 2Thessalonians 1:11

7. Faithfulness

(Also means Loyalty)

Faithfulness is committing oneself to something or someone, for instance, to one's spouse, to a cause, or to a religion. Being faithful requires personal resolve not to wander away from commitments or promises. It's not always easy to be faithful. Christian faith requires trust in God. "O Lord, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will praise Your name; for You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Isaiah 25:1).

Faith means to persuade or be persuaded, which supplies the core-meaning of faith as being "divine persuasion", received from God, and never generated by man.

8. Gentleness

Gentleness is commonly known as meekness, which is a *divinely-balanced* virtue that can only operate through faith (1Tim 6:11).

It is a disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit, unpretentious, and that has the passions under control. The word is best translated 'meekness,' not as an indication of weakness, but of power and strength under control. The person who possesses this quality pardons injuries, corrects faults, and rules his own spirit well. "Brethren, if someone is caught in any sin, you who are spiritual should restore that person in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

"With all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love." (Ephesians 4:2)

9. Self-control

It means having command or "mastery over" or possession of, "one's own behavior." This is accomplished through and by the power of the Lord, "proceeding out from within oneself, but not by oneself."

"...make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love" (2Peter 1:5-7).

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

LESSON 2: PERSONALITY TRAITS & CHARACTER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: -

The God of creation is the God of grace. In gracious creativity, God has blessed human beings with an array of personality types. Our different personalities are gifts to one another. Different personalities warm to different aspects of the Christian story and different ways of expressing spirituality and character.

Individuals can also be stretched by the emphasis of someone who is rather different. An active person may be inspired and helped by a contemplative person to spend more time in prayer, while the latter may be encouraged by an active person to develop the more practical side of their faith. This is how we can learn from each other and help one another.

Support for discipleship will be more effective if it takes into account the variations in our temperaments or personalities.

The Four Personality Types

Sanguine	Choleric	Melancholy	Phlegmatic
Outgoing	Leader	Artistic	Easygoing
Popular	Confident	Close friendships	Gets along with all
Life of the party	Forceful	Organized	Balanced
Lives for fun	Goal oriented	Analytical	Steady

A brief definition is that personality is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that make a person unique. It is the outward expression of oneself. In addition to this, personality arises from within the individual and remains fairly consistent throughout life.

There are four basic temperaments, which determine our personality types.

When we are able to identify who we really are and our temperamental tendencies, we are better able to regulate ourselves. Being aware of our personal tendencies allows us to create self-control and self-discipline within ourselves to avoid unnecessary problems within our lives. Knowing our own personality type better assists us in our relationships with others. People that we do not get along with are not necessarily 'evil'; sometimes it could simply be a clash in personality types.

Understanding your personality type and that of others will give you the information that you need to properly manage your relationships with them. There is nothing

worse than working with people that you do not get along with. But when you can navigate others by identifying their personality type you are more likely to have a better relationship with that person. Apart from boosting our relationships, understanding your personality type can improve your ministry, your family relations (especially if you are a parent) and even your business.

Although there are four basic temperaments, many of us are a combination of two. One temperament may be more dominant than the other within an individual.

1. SANGUINE

The first temperament type is called sanguine. This is the most emotional type. The Sanguine is the popular person who wants fun out of every situation and always wants to be the life of the party. Sanguines love to talk and carry a lot of influence.

The Sanguines are the easiest to spot because they make grand entrances, love attention, attract people with their magnetism, exude charisma, and tell funny stories. What they want to hear from you is how attractive they are, how you like their hair, make-up, clothes, dangling ear-rings or anything else they have put on to ensure that you notice them. They live for the externals and want you to get excited over their style, sense of humour or new red sports car.

Sanguines are popular, talkative and the “centre of attention” at all times, no matter the setting. They are warm, caring, and enjoying—it's easy for something to warm their heart and then have an outburst of response. Although at times, they may speak before they think, they are sincere and loving. Never at a loss for words, this extrovert is everybody's friend but this person will also be the first one to forget you.

The Sanguine lives for the moment, and tends to go with the flow easily. They are quickly distracted, therefore not very reliable.

A person with a sanguine temperament is affectionate, loving, cheerful, optimistic, hopeful, and confident. Because of their bubbly personality, they often appear as though not genuine and come on too strong. They are apt to dominate the conversation or talk too much about themselves. In their enthusiasm, they may exaggerate the truth, waste time, and forget obligations.

The Sanguine has more natural inner-beauty qualities than the other temperaments. They can work on calmness and on controlling their tongue. This trait can be assisted by using God's Word, particularly in Colossians 4:6, *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man."*

When a Sanguine discovers a new hobby or interest, they quickly lose interest on something they once considered to be engaging or fun and turn their attention to the new hobby.

An example of a sanguine in the Bible is the Apostle Peter. Another example is King Saul.

Both were quite unstable in their emotions. That is why Jesus changed Peter's name from Simon meaning "reed" to Peter meaning "stone". We saw how Peter changed dramatically when he was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2 & 3). He became a Christ-confident, stable, reliable and faithful man of God and one of the greatest apostles that ever lived. This is what happens when we allow the Spirit of God and God's word to shape our emotional life.

2. CHOLERIC

The second temperament or personality type is called Choleric. The Choleric is the powerful person who wants to take control of every situation and make decisions for others.

Cholerics love to work and they possess dominance. They are identified as the Powerful Person and are easy to spot because they walk with authority and appear to be in charge of everything. Such people don't want to waste much time on trivial activity with no obvious results or converse with people who have nothing to say of significance.

They are frequently telling other people what to do. They accomplish more than other personality types. They can quickly assess what needs to be done, and are usually right. They don't need to be affirmed on their looks, but they love praise for their accomplishments; their speed in problem solving; their constant goal setting, their loyalty to God, church, mother, business, or country; and their sense of fair play.

The Choleric is the no-nonsense person—practicality is their way of life. Self-sufficient, active, and hard-working, the Choleric gets it done. "I'll do something, right or wrong," is a phrase that characterizes them. They get the job done, whether the results are perfect or not.

Cholerics plan quickly, almost intuitively sizing up what needs to be done, then follows through with the plan. They don't deliberate too long over details. This dogmatic person is a born leader, very keen and capable of responsibility. They will take a stand and stick to it, no matter what—a good and bad aspect of the temperament. As they will not be influenced by what others think and is also the least sensitive or sympathizing of the other four temperaments. You learn to steer clear of the Choleric if you want a shoulder to cry on—they'll just diagnose your problem and give you a solution. Yet, when you come to understand their personality, they are fun to be around and very capable.

The choleric person is an extrovert. They are sure of their ability to handle any situation and can motivate others to action. Their personality perhaps has more weaknesses than strengths. For instance, they are quick tempered and easily angered. Choleric temperaments are irritated easily. The Choleric has to work at developing the inner beauty of a calm spirit. The person who identifies with this personality type can find in God's Word the best way to grow, in Philippians 2:13, which says, "*For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" The words of James 1:19 may also be helpful: "*Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*"

An example of the choleric in the Bible is the Apostle Paul. But when he encountered Christ, he became a very broken and changed man.

3. MELANCHOLY

The third temperament is called Melancholy, who is also known as the perfect person who wants everything done in order and done properly and who appreciates art and music.

Melancholies love to analyze and are cautious.

The Melancholy Perfect Person is usually neatly put together and intellectual looking person. These people are usually quiet, reserved, and a little ill-at-ease in social situations where they don't know everyone. They would rather talk quietly with one person in depth than banter with a group. They consider compliments on clothes and external niceties to be trivial and want to hear about the inner virtues of integrity, wisdom, and spiritual values.

The Melancholy is very sensitive and easily hurt and tends to take what others say in humour as personal and hurtful. Since Sanguines and Cholerics say whatever comes to their minds without weighing their words, they often deflate the Melancholy who is waiting for someone to approach them and say, "I understand you," and really mean it.

The Melancholy is the analytical, systematic person, who labours over details. An extreme introvert, they are constantly analyzing themselves, and others. Though sometimes they can be at the height of happiness, they are more prone to the dark, gloomy and depressed moods, during which they are extremely withdrawn. They don't like large crowds and would usually detest group gatherings. They would not seek to make new acquaintances or new friends.

They have few friends, to whom they are extremely faithful. Self-sacrifice is a great pleasure for a Melancholy, and they feel things rather intensely, though you wouldn't always know it.

They are the studious type, and facts roll easily off their tongue. They can hide much away in their brain and would rather read or study than interact with others.

Gloominess, irritability, and depression characterize the Melancholy. They often times can be sad and unhappy. A melancholic personality type is very frequently gifted with intellect and talent. They are self-disciplined and usually finish every project they start.

The Holy Spirit may have more work to do in the Melancholy because of the need to develop qualities of their inner beauty.

The Melancholy will find help in such verses as Colossians 3:15-16: *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts ... Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."* Colossians 3:2 will also help, *"And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth"*.

An example of a Melancholic in the Bible is Moses. When he met God in the burning bush, his life changed, and he became a very meek man. Because of the change within Moses, God was truly able to place Moses in his divine destiny, to be a deliverer of God's people.

4. PHLEGMATIC

The fourth personality type is called Phlegmatic. The Phlegmatic is the peaceful person who wants to stay out of trouble, keep life on an even plane and get along with everybody.

Phlegmatics like to rest and show steadiness. The Phlegmatic Peaceful Person is amiable, easy to get along with and relaxed.

These people fit into any situation, can blend in with the wallpaper and modify their personality to get along without conflict. They laugh with those who laugh and cry with those who cry. Everyone loves the low-key nature of the inoffensive phlegmatic, and though they are not loud like the Sanguine, they do have a witty sense of humour.

They don't need a lot of praise like the Sanguine, nor do they want to be in charge like the Choleric or get too deeply involved like the Melancholy. Being told that they are of value and their opinion is respected means much to them.

The phlegmatic is a super introvert. It is difficult to rouse them to action. At times they can be selfish and stubborn but most of the time they are easy to get along with and cheerful.

Phlegmatic people are conservative and usually neat, efficient, and dependable. The Phlegmatic is the easy-going, happy-go-lucky person. They are enjoyable to be around. They are always happy and get many pleasures from life, yet are quite laid-back and don't get too excited about much. Phlegmatics would rather take the blame, whether it's their fault or not, than stir up controversy or pick a fight. On the job, they do not seek out the power or the limelight, but rather they work steadily, patiently, and methodically. They are reliable, patient, and methodical in their dealings, and can either work alone or with the most difficult personalities.

They naturally have a dry sense of humour and their wittiness keeps their companions laughing constantly. Phlegmatics don't get ruffled about much and is the same, consistent, caring person each time you see them. They tend not to get too involved in things, and would rather sit back and watch the action. A phlegmatic is gracious and kind to all – they love everyone and they all love him back.

The phlegmatic has some natural inner beauty. Compassion for others is an area they may need to improve. Romans 12:10 says, *"Be kindly affectionate one to another ... in honour preferring one another."*

An example of a phlegmatic in the Bible is Abraham. After he listened to Sarah about having a baby with her servant Hagar, he did not have a problem with allowing Hagar and Ishmael to live with him and Sarah. Hagar's attitude began to change towards Sarah and their relationship become very toxic. Sarah pleaded with Abraham to send

Hagar and Ishmael out but Abraham contested. After receiving more pressure from Sarah to send them out Abraham had to pray to God and ask Him what would be the best solution for him. It was only until God told Abraham it was okay to send them out that he obeyed and sent Hagar and Ishmael out of their camp.

SPIRIT-CONTROLLED TEMPERAMENTS

Spirit-controlled Temperaments show the temperaments when “modified” –how our natural personality will look when it is Spirit-controlled.

The Spirit-filled Sanguine will show strength of character in the self-control that is much needed in their life. The Spirit-filled Choleric will be dynamic in their love, peace, gentleness, and goodness. The Spirit-filled Melancholy will have a joy and peace, which will revolutionize their outlook on life. And the Spirit-filled Phlegmatic will become less stubborn, fearful, and indifferent, while becoming more open, self-controlled, and much more motivated, to make a great, personable leader for Christ.

After finding our own temperaments, it is easy to become discouraged about our shortcomings, but we shouldn't be. The Holy Spirit-filled temperament does not have weaknesses; instead it has great strength—the fruit of the Spirit which is love! (Galatians 5:22-23). No matter what your natural temperament may be, the Spirit gives us strength for every weakness!

The perfect characteristics of each temperament were shown in Jesus Christ—He is our example, the One we should look to as the perfect Spirit-filled temperament.

Though our natural temperament won't be changed when we're filled with the Holy Spirit, our strengths will be increased and our weaknesses will fade away! We rely on the Holy Spirit for everything in the Christian life. When we learn to be filled with Christ, we'll live like Him and that's when our temperament will be Spirit-controlled, more like Jesus. That's our whole goal in life—to be more like the Master, so others can see Him through us!

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION & DEFINITIONS

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: - 1Corinthians 1:26-31; Titus 1:5-9; Luke 6:12-16; Exodus 3: 1-10; Numbers 11:16-17; Joshua 1:1-2

This course presents the biblical foundations of leadership or of anointed servanthood. God has given certain principles in His Word by which His leadership and Church are to function.

Some of us have wonderful gifts, abilities and potentials but often do not realise what we have. The emphasis on this course is to develop your gifts and capacities, and your inter-personal relationships among other leaders and followers.

There are some basic characteristics that makes a successful leader:

- Personal qualities or personalities that are unique to you;
- Thoughts and feelings, which are your attitudes;
- Actions or behaviour

There are other characteristics of successful leaders:

- Empathy (power of understanding, ability to enter into people's feelings – he tries to understand how others feel and is also sympathetic)
- Goal achievement (*Philippians 3:14* – he must have a purpose, a goal and a reason for doing what he does)
- Competence (he has the skills and ability to do a good job and is diligent to give his best for others and for God)
- Emotional stability (he is reasonable, confident, cheerful, gracious, peaceful, and not easily discouraged)
- Group membership (has a strong sense of being part of a group and understands and welcomes the contributions of others)
- Ability to share leadership (works well with others, respects others, has a high regard for others, humbles himself)
- Consistency and dependability (he keeps his word, is reliable and communicates clearly)

Although the above list can be found in most leadership textbooks and also in the Bible, the following four can be included, that is:

- A sense of God's calling or mission

- Awareness of being Christ's channel of love to mankind
- Dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Exemplary living in accordance with Christian morals and ethics (i.e. rule of conduct and moral principles)

God needs people to lead His people

The central truth of this course is that leadership is God's method and God's tool for working out His plan and His purpose for the earth and for people.

Leadership is needed to accomplish a purpose, to get something done. The idea of Christian leadership exists because God has a purpose and He has a definite plan to accomplish that purpose. He does not work in a random way or by chance but knows, in advance, what His purpose is and how He will move to achieve it.

An important part of God's plan is that His work will be done by people, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit. God chooses people and give them specific tasks to do in order to accomplish His purpose. These people are often given direct calls with detailed instructions as to what to do. They in turn can organise groups of people, which they guide towards the goal indicated by the Lord.

Our calling to leadership is not by human standards or qualifications but by God's choice and *grace* (*1Corinthians* 1:26-31; *1Samuel* 16:7). It is important to recognise that it is God who anoints a person to minister or to be a leader. Human organisations can only agree with His anointing. We need to remember that the goal of ministry is spiritual increase and growth in other people's lives, not prestige for the minister.

God also gives to the Church, persons to fill specific positions such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (*Ephesians* 4:11-16; *Romans* 12:6-8). God also gives gifts of administration and helps to support the work of ministry.

The tools that God gives to people to enable them function in their calling as leaders are **the spiritual gifts** (*1Corinthians* 12: 4-11) and **His word** (*2Timothy* 3:16-17; 2:15; *Joshua* 1:8).

The New Testament (NT) presents all Christians as ministers in the sense that all have definite ministries to perform in the Body of Christ. Each Christian has a special and important function to fulfil. Everyone has a role to play in the service of the Lord and we must each seek to know what we are called to do.

There are two distinct ministries in the Church – **Governmental** and **Congregational** ministries. These two sets of ministries complement each other in the fulfilment of God's purpose for the Church and ensure that all are involved in the Lord's business.

Leaders must be qualified spiritually, morally and emotionally to be able to fulfil their functions. The Bible is full of detailed lists and descriptions of leadership qualifications and responsibilities. There are qualifications for priests, prophets and kings in the Old Testament (OT), and for Church leaders in the New Testament (NT).

The main purpose of ministry is that all might be restored to the original image of God by being like Christ – *Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 4:13-32; 5:1-5; Colossians 1:15*. Every church vision must key into this central core of ministry otherwise it is irrelevant.

The evidence of the organised Church, and many types of Christian ministries throughout the world, is evidence that God uses leaders.

Levels of leadership:

There are various levels of leadership. We will start from the lowest to the highest form or level of leadership:

Level 1 – Leadership by position or title (not always necessarily by talent or ability). The influence of this type of leadership does not go beyond the lines of job description or title.

Level 2 – Leadership by relationship or character

Level 3 – Leadership by productivity or results (People like what you do and want to emulate you)

Level 4 – Leadership through people-development or reproduction (People follow you because of what you have done for them. They stay faithful to you)

Level 5 – Leadership by respect (People follow you because of who you are and what you represent)

Definition of Leadership:

What is leadership? Who is a leader?

The concepts of leadership vary in people's minds. Most people define leadership by what a person does. For example, people see a leader as someone who:

- motivates people towards a certain purpose or goal
- draws people into a certain course of action
- gives direction and structure to others' work and efforts
- advises and co-ordinates others
- goes ahead as a guiding force
- holds the authority to lead others by instruction or correction

These definitions are good but there is a lot more to being a leader. Leaders in God's kingdom are judged not so much by what they do or accomplish but by the character they reveal – who they are before what they do. This high standard applies not so much to the leader's achievements but to the condition of his or her heart and spirit. If first the leader's heart is right, godly behaviour will always follow and good leadership will be manifested.

As a general principle in God's kingdom, leaders are called and recognised by character qualifications as well as ministry and functional duties.

The Hebrew word for leader is '*nagiyd*'. It has servant-hood as a base element, and developing out of that base setting forth an example to the people (*John 13:3-5, 12-17*;

Matthew 20:25-28; 23:11-12; Luke 22:24-27). A *nagiyd* leader has as its root the picture of a man or woman under authority, one who is subject to a higher power, and who fulfils the wishes of that power. This is the kind of leader God wants to give His people; a man or woman who would listen to His will, and execute it faithfully with divinely appointed authority. David, a man after God's own heart, was God's *nagiyd* for Israel.

From this definition, to be a leader in God's house, a person must first come squarely under the authority of Almighty God.

A leader must be an example to the people on how to follow God's commands. He is not the one in charge but God. He is simply a person with a responsibility to provide service to others. A leader takes the forefront and leads by example, whether in battle against God's enemies or in establishing truth and justice in God's kingdom.

Another illustration of a leader is that of a shepherd who goes before his people to prepare the way for them. The shepherd in Psalms 23 is a type of Christ and a picture of every leader of God's people.

General Definitions

It is important to first understand certain terms commonly used in leadership:

a) Ministry

The word 'ministry' means to serve or to be a servant. All Christians have the ministry of being servants in the house of the Lord. While public and pulpit ministries don't have room for all Christians, there is always room for dedicated Christian service.

b) Talent

Talents are God-given natural abilities and opportunities, which vary with each individual. Each member of the Body of Christ has received at least one talent or ability from the Lord, and every believer has the responsibility to develop the talent he has been given and use it for the kingdom of God (*Matthew 25*). God can adapt your talent to match your spiritual gifts.

c) Grace (*John 1:14; Romans 12:3, 6; Ephesians 4:7*)

The NT definition of grace carries the meaning of divine influence upon the heart, and its reflections in the life of the receiver. It also means the deposit of God within a Christian, an enablement that makes him come forth in an area of service to the Body of Christ. The grace of God is freely given to each member of the Body of Christ, that each might minister freely to all of the Body. In this way, the grace of God fosters growth in the Body. You do not earn or work for God's grace. It is a free gift by God's Sovereign act or by demand in prayer.

d) Gift (*Romans 12:6; 1Corinthians 14:1, 12; 1Timothy 4:14; 2Timothy 1:6*)

This means an endowment and a blessing from God. In this case, the recipient is not the focus of the gift but the focus is on all of the other people beyond the recipient whom God will bless through the recipient's exercise of the gift (*1Corinthians 14:12; 12:7*). Spiritual gifts are from the Lord and are not a tool for attracting attention or admiration. Instead, they must be sought through prayer, and must be faithfully used to serve those whom the Lord wants to help through you.

e) Office

This word refers to an official right to do or practice something. It denotes a specific action, function or involvement. All members of the Body do not have the same office or the same function (*Romans 12:4; 1Timothy 3:1, 10*). Each part must therefore know its office to fulfil, and must be faithful to the responsibilities of that office.

f) Ordained Ministry (*Jeremiah 1:5; John 15:16*)

Ordination is commonly defined as the act of officially investing a person with ministerial functions and holy orders. To officially ordain someone to the ministry is to formally appoint someone to this work, and to regulate the ministry activities of that person.

Points to note about ordination:

- It is important to note that true ordination does not precede ministry; it follows it.
- Ordination does not produce a ministry but faithful ministry leads to recognition and ordination.
- It is only by the enablement of the Holy Spirit that a person is truly ordained by God to do the work of ministry.
- A man is not ordained by man so that he can function. Instead, he is recognized by man because he has already been spiritually ordained by God, and also because he is already functioning in the ministry that God has given him.
- Ministry is about true service, and not for position or title or selfish ambition. It is very easy to receive the recognition and adulation of men and yet miss the anointing and touch of God. You cannot do without divine recognition as it is a major requirement for effective ministry.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

LESSON 2: GOVERNMENTAL & CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Governmental & Congregational Ministries

The Early Church was organised in such a way that all members of each congregation play an active role in the Church's life. Within her membership, the Early Church had a variety of people with different spiritual gifts that were profitable to the entire local body of believers.

Every ministry or leadership has as its main purpose to edify or build up the Body of Christ (1Corinthians 14:12) so that they can grow up to be like Christ (Ephesians 4:13; Romans 8:29) and that they are equipped to bring others to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20).

The two main areas of gift-function were those Christians who guided and laboured in the Word of God (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 4:11-16); and those who participated in the various congregational ministries of 1Corinthians 12:4-11 and Romans 12:3-8.

The generic terms used in the Bible to describe these leaders were Elder (Gk – *Presbuteros*), Bishop (Gk – *Episkopee*) and Deacon (Gk – *Diakonia*). Elders and Bishops exercise the Governmental ministries and provide spiritual oversight and care for the Church. The deacons provide support and assistance to the Governmental ministries and they are not necessarily addressed with a title such as deacons, etc. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ described himself as an elder (1Peter 5:1). The emphasis here is not on titles but functions and authority in the Church as ordained by the Lord.

(Further Readings: Acts 15:2, 22 – 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18; Philippians 1:1; 1Timothy 3:1; James 5:14; 1Peter 2:25)

The Congregational and Governmental ministries do have a difference in function and in authority, but have equal importance in regards to their necessity and significance in the Church. Governmental ministries are given divine authority to rule the Body of Christ through the offices invested on them. To function in these offices, one must receive a divine call from God and under His authority to carry out His purposes.

To function in a congregational ministry, a person must understand his position of responsibility and his limitations. Each part of the Body of Christ has to receive a call from God, but not necessarily to function in a governmental ministry.

a) Congregational Ministries – *1Corinthians 12:4-11; Romans 12:3-8*

There are gifts given to believers to enable them provide service or ministry within the Body of Christ for its edification and growth, and include the gifts of the Spirit and other ministry gifts (*1Corinthians 12:7, 11*). These gifts are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the working of miracles, gifts of healing, prophesy, diverse kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, discerning of spirits, teaching, exhorting, giving, hospitality, helps, serving, governing or administration, and showing mercy. There are 17 spiritual gifts or more, which every believer in Christ can have and exercise for the service of the Lord.

Many members of the Early Church operated in these different ministries of the Spirit, but they did not necessarily have names or titles. When it was necessary to create a position, the early Church chose out from among her members those who already manifested the wisdom, character and anointing of the Lord upon their lives. Selection of deacons in Acts 6:3 is one such example.

b) Governmental Ministries – *Ephesians 4:11-16*

These are the five-fold ministries given to the Church and include Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher. To be effective, these ministries also depend on the gifts of the Holy Spirit as mentioned earlier. The gifts are God's anointing, ability and enablement to fulfil the functions of the office.

Governmental ministries oversee and develop or equip other ministries in the Body of Christ. They prepare the saints for their various ministries, but do not do all the ministering for the saints. In Ephesians 4:12, two main functions of these ministries are fully described as (i) to equip or prepare believers for the work of ministry and (ii) to edify, build up or uphold the Body of Christ (vs.16).

In the overall framework of Church leadership, the governmental ministries operate within the context of Church eldership. In the NT, Church government is entrusted to the eldership, which includes the five-fold governmental ministries. The eldership is a local church ruling body with a supportive role to God-appointed leaders such as apostles or bishops (*Acts 15:2, 22, 23; 16:4; Philippians 1:1*). Members of this body are often referred to as Elders.

Discerning/ Recognising and Releasing ministries

Governmental ministries have an important role to play to ensure that congregational ministries are developed in such a way that the Church grows and becomes spiritually healthy and at the same time functions effectively as it is called to be (*Acts 6:7*). They need to be able to have spiritual eyes that can discern those who are called to a particular work in the Body, whether in a Governmental function or

Congregational, and to be able to release them to that work. These imply that they have two other functions of discerning potential leaders and releasing them.

To release the numerous ministries that lie dormant in the Body of Christ, Church leadership must function with a spiritual discernment like Christ's. In discerning potential leaders, it is so easy to judge people by outward appearances rather than the heart.

There are many people God called into ministry, who would not have fitted into today's qualification for leadership (*1Corinthians 1:26-29; 1Samuel 16:7*). For example, the early apostles were mostly fishermen, untrained, uneducated and treated with contempt by the society (*Acts 4:13; Matthew 4:18-22*). Paul was a murderer and persecutor of the church (*Galatians 1:23; 1Timothy 1:12-16; 1Corinthians 15:9-10*). Timothy was a timid and frail man (*1Timothy 4:11-14; 5:21-23; 2Timothy 1:7-8*). King David was the youngest in the family (*1Samuel 16:11-13*). Moses was also the youngest in the family and a stammerer (*Exodus 4:10-12*). There are many other Biblical examples of leaders chosen by God, who would not otherwise have met the qualifications as set by fellow men today. One has to look past the natural deficiencies and see the spiritual potential that believers have in the Lord.

The process of recognising and releasing ministries in the Body of Christ takes time. The steps of this process are:

- Recognise the ability and potential in the person
- Focus on the positive areas in the person
- Challenge the person to fulfil their potential and develop their gifts
- Be willing to spend time with them
- Be willing to be frustrated with them, without giving up on them
- Encourage them through the times of mistakes
- Plant a vision in their heart of true shepherding
- Give them opportunities for development
- Put confidence in their ministry
- Pray their ministry into existence

GIFTS AND MINISTRIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

GIFT/ MINISTRY	SCRIPTUR ES	DEFINITION	FUNCTION
Apostle	Eph. 4:11 1Cor. 12:28 Acts 2:43	One sent forth with orders; A delegate or ambassador; Bearer of a commission.	To establish churches; To ordain elders; To bring forth revelation of the Word; To train and discipline ministries; To be a spiritual father to others.
Prophet/ Prophetess	Eph. 4:11; 2:20 Acts 11:27- 30	Foreteller of God's Word and future events; Forth-teller of God's Word under inspiration of the	To function in the office of a prophet; To confirm direction of ministry; To travel with apostles in team

	Acts 13:1-4 Acts 21:10-11 Exodus 15:20 Luke 2:36	Spirit; Mouthpiece or spokesman for God; An interpreter of God's Word.	ministry confirming local churches.
Evangelist	Eph. 4:11 Acts 21:8 2Tim. 4:5	Preacher of the gospel (messenger of good news); Preacher having a harvesting ministry.	To train soul-winners; To win the lost through preaching and miracles; To work with apostolic teams in starting and establishing local churches.
Pastor/ Shepherd	Eph. 4:11 John 10:16 John 21:16 1Pet. 5:2-3	Herdsmen of God's people; An overseer of the Church; One who tends, guards, feeds and guides the flock of God.	To feed the flock; To counsel the flock; To lead the flock; To identify with the flock; To oversee a local flock.
Teacher	Eph. 4:11 1Cor. 12:28 1Tim. 3:2 2Tim. 2:2, 24	Instructor in God's Word; One who imparts systematic knowledge; A teacher of other teachers.	To establish truth and doctrine from God's Word; To teach others how to teach; To correct doctrine; To balance the prophet's inspirational ministry.
Prophecy	Rom. 12:6 1Cor. 12:10 1Cor. 13:2; 14:3	To occasionally foretell future events; To speak under the inspiration of God's Spirit; To inspire, confirm, and reinforce revealed truth.	To exhort, edify and comfort through inspirational speech; To encourage Christians through the anointing of the Spirit.
Ministry	Acts 6:1 Rom. 15:31 Rom. 12:7 2Cor. 4:1	One who attends as a servant; One who renders service, aid and relief to others	To serve in any capacity available; To show a willing spirit to meet needs at anytime; To minister to others' needs and desires.
Teaching	Rom. 12:7 2Tim. 2:2	One who instructs others; One who instills doctrine into another	To lay out material for the edification, exhortation and comfort of others; To instruct others in a supportive role to a true ministry.
Exhortation	Rom. 12:8 Acts 4:36 Acts 9:26-27 Acts 11:22-26 1Cor. 14:3 2Cor. 1:4, 6	One who consoles, encourages, strengthens others; One who comforts others on a personal level; One who encourages the Church with short words	To warm, console or admonish the believers; To cheer or comfort the Church in times of stress or need.

	Titus 1:9	of edification	
Giving	Rom. 1:11; 12:8 Eph. 4:28	One who liberally shares and imparts to others what he has to give; One who gives to others out of the abundance that God has given to him.	To meet others' needs through giving; To believe God for blessings so that others may receive them in turn; To give financially and sacrificially to meet the needs of the Church.
Ruling	Rom. 12:8 1Thess. 5:12 1Tim. 3:4, 5, 12	One who presides over various Church functions; One who leads by good example and service; One who organises, facilitates and administrates Church activities.	To protect or guard the flock with a leader's instinct; To be a support ministry to the elders of a local church; To organise and carry out activities and programmes.
Mercy	Rom. 12:8 Matt. 5:7 Matt. 6:2-4 James 3:17	One who feels the hurt of others; One who is loving and compassionate; One who shows sincere, gracious favour to others; One who is motivated to encourage and cheer	To minister to the sick, elderly, shut-in and needy; To show kindness and gentleness to the hurt; To anonymously give to meet needs.
Word of wisdom	1Cor. 12:8 Matt. 21:25 Matt. 22:21 John 8:7	One who receives supernatural revelation and wisdom from God for situations; One who is anointed by the Spirit to give specific counsel to others that meets their needs.	To perceive and communicate how the ways of God apply to a specific situation; To function and speak under a supernatural mantle of wisdom and prudence; To receive specific understanding from the Lord about the best way to handle a situation or problem.
Word of knowledge	1Cor. 12:8 1Cor. 5:3-5 Acts 5:3; 9:10; 8:23	One who receives from God supernatural facts and information which would be humanly impossible to know.	To speak forth by divine revelation the specific facts about a situation; To speak to others God's mind toward a specific situation; To reveal to individuals or groups their specific needs or provision by divine revelation.
Faith	1Cor. 12:9 Matt. 21:19	One who can believe God for the impossible; One who has the special gift of faith for what God has promised to do; an ability to see God's	To speak the word of faith with results; To receive from God supernatural power to believe Him for miracles.

		promises come to pass	
Healing	1Cor. 12:9, 28, 30 Acts 4:22-30	One who is used by God as the vessel through which He imparts healing to the physical body at times of His choosing	To be the instrument through which God brings a healing or cure; To lay one's hands on others and see them restored to health by the power of the Spirit, on a regular basis; To be the instrument through which God's power frequently heals a particular kind of sickness.
Miracles	1Cor. 12:28 1Cor. 4:19-20 2Tim. 1:7 Rom. 1:16	One who performs what is naturally impossible through the power of God; One who has been gifted with a ministry of power and deliverance	To perform the supernatural through the power of God; To do something not normally possible, to the glory of God.
Discerning of spirits	1Cor. 12:10 Acts 16:16-18	One who recognises what spirit (divine, evil or human) is causing a certain manifestation or activity.	To judge accurately what is of the Spirit of God and what is not; To have a gifted sensitive spirit that distinguishes between truth and error; To know the spiritual source behind something or someone.
Tongues	1Cor. 12:10 1Cor. 14:5, 6, 18, 21-23, 27-28, 39 Acts 2:4, 8-11 Acts 10:46 Acts 19:6	One who speaks forth a language he does not understand; One who speaks by the Spirit in a language that he has not previously learned.	To speak out a supernatural utterance which is interpreted by the same or different person in a public gathering for the edification of the Church; To speak forth a language not previously learned by formal education, yet is understandable to its hearers; To speak forth a heavenly language as a sign of the reception of the baptism of the Holy Spirit for one's personal edification; it's not the same as the gift of tongues.
Interpretation of tongues	1Cor. 12:30 1Cor. 14:6-14, 27-28 Acts 10:46	One who is given supernatural understanding to interpret the meaning of a message in tongues to the Church	To interpret the meaning of a message given by the gift of tongues in a congregation.
Governments	1Cor. 12:28 Rom. 12:8 1Tim. 5:17	One who steers, directs or pilots an activity in the Church or a local church.	To guide some of the affairs of the Church; To operate in the gift of

			administration.
Helps	1Cor. 12:28	One who gives relief and help; One who lightens the load of leaders by doing certain practical things for them	To help the local church in practical ways; To relieve some of the every day needs of the people in the Church; To relieve those who serve in the Word of some of their routine responsibilities.
Intercession	Rom. 8:26, 27, 34; 11:2 1Tim. 2:1 Isa. 59:16	One who confers with or entreats another person; One who gets to meet a person for conversation, consultation or supplication	To pray for others with a supernatural revelation of their needs; To bring the needs of the Church before the Lord with a special fervency and frequency; To have a deep prayer life and ministry which God uses as a speaking vessel to bring certain needs before Him.
Elder	Acts 11:30 Acts 14:23 1Tim. 4:14 1Tim. 5:17-19	One who is older, or a senior; One who has advanced and matured in life	To lead and rule the people of God; To shepherd the people of God.
Bishop/ Overseer	Acts 1:20 Phil. 1:1 1Tim. 3:1-8 Titus 1:7 1Pet. 2:25	One who watches over, curates or guards others.	To watch over the Church; To guard, protect and help the flock.
Deacon	Acts 6:1-6 Rom. 16:1 1Tim. 3:8, 12	One who serves guests food and drink at table	To serve others in practical ways; To do menial tasks in the Church; To usher, serve communion, or take the offering in a local church service.

There are many other gifts or ministries in the Church such as the ministry of a singer, musician, etc.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

LESSON 3: THE CALL TO LEADERSHIP

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

True Leadership

The maintenance of a balanced leadership that does not become overbearing on God's flock but brings harmony to the Church is very essential. A true leader of God is firm and strong, but nevertheless does not lord it over or domineer the people of God (1Peter 5:1-5). It is a false leader who is so insecure in his relationship with God and with others that he must compensate by unscriptural domination, control and dictatorship over God's people. The Lord Himself taught His apostles that leadership in the kingdom of God is different to that in the world (Matthew 20:20-28). The high officials and rulers of this world lord it over their subjects (vs. 25) whereas Christian leaders obtain recognition through their humility and service. Christ obtained greatness through His obedience, humility and service (Matthew 20:28; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 5:8-9; 12:2).

Loving and not lording is the standard in God's kingdom.

Another warning against domineering and false leadership is from Ezekiel 34:1-16.

The following columns show in general terms the contrast between true and false leadership. True leaders love the people of God, while false leaders lord their authority over the people.

Serial no.	True Leadership	False Leadership
1.	Concentrates on influence from WITHIN by encouraging, inspiring and motivating.	Depends on external controls from WITHOUT, using restrictions, rules and regulations.
2.	Enjoys a good relationship with co-workers, showing respect for the individual.	Regulates co-workers from "I am superior - you are inferior" standpoint.
3.	Works with co-workers towards long-range goals, with concern for the workers' development.	Demands immediate results, even if it damages the potential in the co-worker.
4.	Aims to make himself unnecessary.	Creates an atmosphere where the subordinate is permanently dependent on him.
5.	Values individual workers; encourages and praises rather than condemn them.	Has a low opinion of workers; very critical of others' mistakes.

6.	Always willing to discuss decisions and reasons for the decisions, unless circumstances do not allow.	Interprets questions as personal criticism or disloyalty.
7.	Liberates the individual, encourages ideas and participation, equips people to produce definite results.	Limits individual freedoms, prefers to make all decisions, and does not train anyone else to function effectively.
8.	He is a 'heart' man, portraying a genuine concern for others	He is 'head' man, showing little or no human compassion.
9.	Is considerate and concerned for others.	Is concerned only with himself.

If a leader wants primarily to make people dependent upon his presence (thus giving him a sense of power) he will never properly train those under him who desire to be used of the Lord. God sets tremendous importance on a leader's reasons and motives. The wrong motives will poison a leader's work, while the right and pure motives will overcome a host of difficulties.

There are some improper and carnal motives a person could have in aspiring to leadership. Examples of such carnal motives are:

- The desire for the glory of a fulfilled ministry more than the process of meeting people's spiritual needs;
- The desire for power, position, a title of respect, or the increased authority that goes with an office;
- The desire to be the guy in front of the room giving orders;
- The desire to get a chance to shine, to prove that you are better, to be enjoyed and praised for your own abilities and traits;
- The desire to be held up for public approval and served by others.

On the other hand, we have godly and pure motives. Examples are:

- A desire to serve others and meet their needs, to make them successful in their callings and ministries, as Jonathan did for David;
- A hunger to show the love and mercy of God to those that so desperately need it;
- A deep, stubborn commitment to be faithful to the will of God in our lives;
- An urgency to lead others to Christ;
- A need to unite family members under Christ's headship;
- A drive to help the spiritually sick, poor and oppressed

The Call of Leadership

While everyone is called by God, leaders are divinely called or appointed to lead. The call of God to lead is the point of revelation, the personal foundation for ministry. God's calling establishes your place in the Body of Christ, and victory in the ministry hinges upon this initial call from God. There must be a divine encounter with the Lord before a person can be sent out by the Lord. God must call the person and equip him before he goes forth.

Unfortunately, some have entered positional or governmental ministries in presumption and without receiving a divine call from God. They have entered the

ministry in the same way as they would enter any other profession in the world. The Bible is full of such people who went forth of their own initiative without the Lord sending them and these all failed (Jeremiah 23:21, 31-32; 27:15; 29:9; Ezekiel 13:6-9). These self-appointed leaders have misled so many and make them believe a lie. God's people have therefore suffered as a result.

There are 3 ways that a man can be appointed to an office:

- i) God can appoint him;
- ii) Man may appoint him;
- iii) A person may appoint himself

In the world today, there are many leaders who appoint themselves or are appointed by man, and few appointed by God.

1. Self-Appointed leadership (Numbers 16; Jude 1:4, 8-11)

A self-appointed leader takes upon him the authority and responsibility of a spiritual office into which he has not been divinely called. Korah in the OT is a typical example of self-appointed leadership (Numbers 16). Such leaders are self-willed and presumptuous who want authority that is not given to them. They usually rise up against God-ordained leadership, as Korah did against Moses.

2. Man-appointed leadership

Man-appointed leaders claim to receive a call from God, but the call is by the authority of human vessels who are not speaking by the unction / anointing of the Lord. Man-appointed leadership is very common in our society today. Many are called into position of authority in the church on the basis of their strength and ability, their academic qualifications, training and education. These things though good, cannot replace the call of God, which alone brings anointing and the true authority of God upon an individual's life.

The man-appointed leader is destined to rob and spoil the people of the Lord. He is out to get what he wants and what he needs, at the expense of the sheep. He is not concerned with the needs of the sheep but more interested in his own selfish desires. This is a picture of a hireling, who lives off the sheep as opposed to the true shepherd, who will die for the sheep.

3. God-appointed leadership

The Bible gives us patterns, guidelines and examples of God-appointed leadership. These leaders were appointed by God to function in a given capacity. They are God's choice; God's appointed and placed ministries. There are two major ways God calls or appoints people into leadership:

- a) By a direct call – this could come in the form of a personal conviction, a vision or an audible call from the Lord. Examples are Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4), Moses (Exodus 3:10-12), Samuel (1Samuel 3:4, 19-20), the early church apostles (Luke 6:12-16), Paul (Acts 9:1-6), Bezaleel (Exodus 31:1-5), Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8-10), Prophet Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-10).

- b) By an indirect call through a God-ordained leader – this could come in the form of a specific instruction or command from the Lord by prophesy, vision or conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Biblical examples are:

- i) Aaron by Moses (Numbers 3:10);
- ii) King David by Samuel (1Samuel 16:1, 12-13);
- iii) King Saul by Samuel (1Samuel 9:16-17);
- iv) Joshua by Moses (Numbers 27:18-23);
- v) Prophet Elisha & others by Elijah (1Kings 19:15-16);
- vi) Paul by Ananias (Acts 9:10-18);
- vii) Apostle Matthias by the early apostles (Acts 1: 23-26);
- viii) Elders by Titus (Titus 1:5);
- ix) Deacons by the early apostles through the believers (Acts 6:1-7); and
- x) Believers with a desire to serve (1Timothy 3:1)

The indirect call is the commonest form of divine appointment into leadership today. However, many people may help to develop a ministry though the preparation process, but the Lord must initially call people to His work. It is the Lord who calls and separates. When God calls, He sends with a specific mission or function to carry out in the Church.

It is important to recognise that God calls into both governmental and congregational ministries. A ministry of helps is just as important as a ministry of an apostle. A ministry of hospitality is just as important as the ministry of a prophet. Though there are different callings in the Body, all of the callings are important and necessary. The difference lies in function, not in importance.

The wisdom of God in calling different ones to function in different positions is past human understanding and human legislation. God can call anyone to a place of ministry. 1Corinthians 1:26-29 makes it clear about the kind of people God calls. God's calling is without discrimination or partiality to anyone. His calling does not depend on anyone's status or on how wise, noble or mighty one is. He can call the despised, the weak, and the people the world consider as foolish.

God's calling

It is important for every leader to recognise his calling from the Lord, otherwise such a person would not know where he fits into God's agenda in the Church. The following chart will help to identify or discover where a leader's gifts or calling are. It is important to hear from God to affirm the gifts and callings that are already in a leader.

Man's response to God's calling

Receiving God's call is the most exciting event in anyone's life. Blessing in ministry confirms the call, and helps establish a leader's confidence in his call. In the face of failure and criticism, every genuine Christian leader is taken back to his call.

There is a difference between being a 'man of God' – as all are called to be, and being 'God's man' – one called to leadership.

Each member of the Body has a calling and each calling is unique. In the Bible, we can see various examples and great diversities in God's method of calling. Leaders are called in different ways, for example:-

a) Sovereign call

1. Moses was singled out by God who spoke to him from a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-6)
2. Samuel was called by God through an audible voice while he was asleep (1Samuel 3:1-18)
3. Isaiah was worshipping in the temple when called by God (Isaiah 6:1-9)
4. Joseph was called by God through a dream (Genesis 37:1-10)
5. Jacob was called by God through God's hand from the time of birth (Genesis 25:22-26)
6. Paul was called by God through a visitation by the risen Lord (Acts 9:1-9)
7. Abraham was called at the age of 70 through the word of the Lord (Genesis 12:1-5)
8. The apostles were called by the Lord Jesus Christ ((Matthew 4:18-22)

b) Others are called through men

1. Samuel went to David and anointed him with oil (1Samuel 16:1-14)
2. Paul instructed Titus to appoint elders in the churches of Crete (Titus 1:5)
3. Aaron was called by God through Moses (Exodus 3:13-17)
4. Saul was called by God through prophet Samuel (1Samuel 10:1-2)
5. Timothy was called by God through his family upbringing and the hand of Paul (1Timothy 1:2, 18; 2Timothy 1:2, 5, 9; 2:1)

The above examples show us how God calls His leaders in different ways. Therefore, people should not judge the means of another's call just because it may be different from their own.

Throughout history, men and women have responded to God's calling in various ways:

1. The response of unworthiness

An example here is that of Moses who did not consider himself worthy to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 3:11). Moses' feeling of unworthiness was a feeling of being undeserving, useless, valueless and inadequate. Although many people who are called of God feel unworthy of the calling, God's divine enablement and protection causes them to respond fully to His call, like Moses eventually did.

2. The response of timidity and the fear of rejection (Jeremiah 1:8-9)

Everyone called by God should not go forth in their own name or strength except with divine accompaniment. The courage to go forth is hinged upon the assurance of God's call. The presence of divine commission makes all the difference in the spiritual productivity of a ministry. The confidence of the call and name of God, however, are keys to helping a leader overcome the fear of rejection.

3. The response of lack of eloquence

Some may feel that they lack the ability to speak (Exodus 4:10; Jeremiah 1:6). God wants a man that will obey His word and depend upon His Spirit. He wants a vessel through which He can show His glory, not man's glory. The Lord will give all His leaders the words to speak and the ability to speak them, when they will speak out of their weakness, to His glory (Jeremiah 1:7, 9).

4. The response of inferiority (Judges 6:15-17)

Some will rather want someone else to take the call of leadership instead of them. This is a form of inferiority. Example was Moses ((Exodus 4:13) and God had to send his brother Aaron to assist him. This feeling of inferiority is a constant reminder to leaders of their own inadequacy and the need for them to always depend on God's help and strength in their ministry.

5. The response of youth

Jeremiah is an example of someone who used his youth as an excuse to refuse God's calling (Jeremiah 1:6); so also did Gideon (Judges 6:15). Some are afraid of people who have attained more age, experience and education than they have. It is important to set aside this excuse of youth and simply obey God's word. God will always provide the strength and wisdom to match His call.

A leader must have a right response to God's call if he is to be effective in ministry.

There are biblical principles we need to know and apply them if we are to be effective as leaders. We shall look at certain case studies in the Bible for guidance.

Case 1 – Isaiah's call (Isaiah 6:8-9) – A sense of calling

'Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying; "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." And He said, "Go, and tell this people"'

One of the tasks of the Holy Spirit is to call godly leaders in the Church. Jesus said to his disciples in John 15:16, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."

Case 2 – Total commitment exemplified by Paul (Acts 26:19) – A sense of mission

After giving the testimony of his conversion and call to King Agrippa, Paul said in Acts 26:19, "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Paul was totally committed to his call to spread the gospel and establish churches throughout the known world. His life demonstrated three basic concepts of leadership:

1. He was committed to the goals and spirit of his call (Philippians 3:7-8)
2. He translated his objectives into the lives of his followers (2 Timothy 2:1-2). He also bore with all necessary hardship in pursuing that end (2 Corinthians 4:8-11; 11:23-33)

3. He was alert to change. He adapted to cultural, social, and political changes and thus never lost his relevancy (1Corinthians 9:19-22)

Case 3 – Joshua & Caleb resisted a popular opinion that was contrary to the will of God (Numbers 13)

The statements of Joshua and Caleb in Numbers 13:30; 14:6-9 was a testimony of their absolute confidence and faith in God to enable them to possess the Promised Land, unfavorable circumstances notwithstanding.

As a leader, Joshua was constantly faced with choices which were, in many cases, contrary to popular opinion. In each of those cases, he called on the people to place their faith in God rather than look at the impossible circumstances. A leader must not condition his appeal to the sentiment or mood of the times but on a conviction of the word of God. Spiritual advance requires faith, and unbelief will never see beyond the difficulties. Unbelief looks at obstacles, ‘walled cities and giants’, while faith looks at God.

Case 4 – The faith of Abraham (Genesis 12)

Another example of faith in God is that demonstrated by Abraham. His ability to lead was tested in three areas of faith:

1. Faith to risk everything and follow God’s faithfulness by venturing into the unknown (Genesis 12:1-5)
2. Absolute reliance on God that moves beyond facts to faith. Abraham and Sarah were, humanly speaking, beyond the ability to have a child, yet they believed God’s promises concerning an offspring (Genesis 17:1-27).
3. Faith to sacrifice all things precious in order to please God. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son Isaac in obedience to God (Genesis 22:1-19).

Case 5 – Humility exemplified by Gideon (Judges 6 -8; Matthew 18:1-4)

A humble person is one who is devoid of all arrogance and self-exaltation, a person who is willingly submitted to God and His will. Gideon demonstrates traits of godly and humble leadership, for example,

1. He was unwilling to lead unless God calls (Genesis 6:36-40)
2. He depended on God at every situation (Genesis 7:1-8)
3. He was willing to use the gifts God had given him to lead others and set examples (Genesis 7:17)
4. He gave God the glory before and after his victory (Genesis 7:15; 8:3,23)
5. He humbly gave others credit that belonged to him (Genesis 8:1-3)
6. He refused to establish a dynasty after he had fulfilled God’s charge (Genesis 8:22-23). Godly leaders do things God’s way. The leader who seeks to benefit himself at the expense of others is on a path to self-destruction. **God judges leaders not on how much they accomplish, but on whether they do things His way.**

Case 6 – Hearing from God like Peter (Matthew 16:13-20).

Other examples are Noah & the ark, Moses & the tabernacle. God gave clear instructions to Noah on how to build the ark (Genesis 6:13-22). In Genesis 6:22, it is recorded that Noah did according to all that God commanded him and thus, he was saved from the destruction by the flood. Moses was commanded by God to ensure that he built the tabernacle and its furniture exactly the way he was shown on the mountain (Exodus 25:40; Hebrews 8:5). Anything short of that would have been unacceptable to God, because it has to be an exact replica or mirror image of that in heaven.

No one can build the Lord's house except under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that reveals the mind of God to us because He alone knows the mind of God (1 Corinthians 2:9-16 **READ**). This is the reason why people need to be filled with the Spirit before commencing any service for God. This has been the case from the OT times until present.

The godly leader 'hears' from God, that is, his or her spirit is tuned to the prompting and lessons of the Holy Spirit. Peter's answer to Jesus' question prompted a response from Jesus to the fact Peter heard from God.

It is to be emphasised here that church leadership would always lead and be based not on man's ability to reason things out as much as on his readiness and receptivity to hear God through "revelation knowledge", the things that God unfolds by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Case 7 – A teachable spirit exemplified by King David (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22)

In Acts 13:22, it is recorded that God testified of the boy David, "I have found David the son of Jesse, **a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.**" Only one man in the Bible enjoys the designation of being a man after God's heart, that is, David. To outward appearance, David is more readily remembered as a gross sinner. He committed adultery, murdered, lied, made severe mistakes in judgement, was a poor manager, and finally was unable to manage his home. Yet God said "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all my will".

Almost every time we read about David, he was doing something wrong, yet God commended the heart of his leadership. How do we explain this? The answer is in the fact that with every mistake, David repented; and of more equal importance, he learned from his mistakes. Not only was he humble and teachable, he listened to his critics and his enemies as well; and, foremost of all, he heeded the prophets of God.

This teachable spirit is the trait that caused God to classify him as Israel's finest leader.

Case 8 – Leaders must have character qualifications (1Timothy 3:1-13; James 3:1-2)

In the early church, individuals were selected on the basis of proven maturity and character to lead so that the whole church could function effectively in worship, service, outreach, and the fulfilment of individual spiritual gifts.

The qualifications outlined in the passage focuses on the leader's certified and sustained ethical character. There are over a dozen significant qualities expected, which include spiritual preparedness, self-control, social graciousness, domestic order, and holy living.

The basis for continual ministry is continual commitment to character. If a leader falls from these ethical standards, he or she should accept removal from leadership until an appropriate season of re-verifying of character can be fulfilled.

Leaders in the world are seldom judged on their personal lives. Leaders in the church, however, are judged not so much by what they accomplish as by the character they reveal – who they are before what they do. This high standard applies not so much to the leader's achievements as to the condition of his or her heart and spirit.

It is possible to have grand accomplishments but still manifest a loveless, ungodly spirit. But if first the leader's heart is right, godly behaviour will always follow and good leadership will be manifested.

A leader must watch out for the following dangers, which stems from wrong motives. These dangers may disable a leader from his course of service, for example

- (a) Ego or personal pride
- (b) Over-confidence
- (c) Popularity and praise
- (d) Jealousy
- (e) Power
- (f) Discouragement, anxiety and depression – these do not necessarily come as a result of wrong motives.

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SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

LESSON 4: ANOINTING & CHARACTER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Anointing of the Holy Spirit (1Corinthians 2:1-5; 1:27-31)

A leader's success in ministry depends heavily on the Holy Spirit's anointing on his life. Without God's anointing on a leader's ministry, it will not produce any lasting fruit for the kingdom of God. The external look of a leader is not a primary issue, but the Spirit's ability to use his life to bring change into the lives and characters of others is a primary issue (1Corinthians 4:20; 2:4-5).

The Church today desperately needs to operate under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It needs something divine to create its success (John 6:63). Flesh cannot glory in God's presence (1Corinthians 1:27-29; 2Corinthians 4:7) and the holy anointing oil cannot rest upon the things of the flesh.

Anointing is born from a humble and broken heart before God. An anointed person is one who is consecrated to the Lord. To be consecrated means to be dedicated to God for His purposes; made holy in character and thus fit for spiritual use and a setting apart for God's service.

Definition of anointing (John 7:37-39; 1Corinthians 3:6-7)

The anointing of God's Spirit is the overflowing of God's divine life into a human life which has been consecrated to God, which makes it spiritually rich and thus able to impart effectively the light and fragrance of God's word into the lives of others, producing in them deep spiritual satisfaction and obvious Christian fruitfulness.

The Bible says: 'Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights...When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses...they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them...and he gave them all the commands the Lord had given him...' (Exodus 34:28-32 NIV).

When the Israelites were in Moses' company, there was a look on his face that told them he'd been in the presence of the Lord. They could see it and sense it. The Bible refers to this as the 'anointing' (1 John 2:27).

Simply put, the anointing is God equipping and empowering you to succeed in what He's called you to do. Anointed leadership is always characterized by these four benchmarks:

- Calling - When people are around an anointed leader, they sense that God has truly gifted and assigned that person to fulfil a certain purpose
- Character - People see God's nature in an anointed leader, and as a result they trust them
- Competence - An anointed leader has the ability to get the job done right. The results validate his or her calling.
- Conviction - Anointed leaders aren't wishy-washy; they have moral and spiritual backbone and they stand up for what's right.

These four qualities are benchmarks of God-called leadership, and when people see them at work in your life, they will follow you.

The following typical examples illustrate when the anointing of the Holy Spirit is in evidence:

- When God goes beyond the natural abilities of a leader or a believer and gives him or her a supernatural ability to preach, teach or counsel (Exodus 35:10, 30-35; 31:1-6; 36:1-2);
- When a leader preaches an entire message spontaneously, as quickened by the Spirit, totally discarding his planned message, and the congregation is moved spiritually in a special way;
- When the conscious sense of God's abiding and moving presence appears (2Chronicles 5:13-14);
- When a believer or leader's message brings spiritual results in the lives of his hearers, even though it might not follow the rules of grammar, homiletics or professional presentation. (This does not imply that one should not learn speaking skills).
- The power of the Spirit in the ministry of a believer or leader when God heals the sick, delivers sinners, and shows His power through His yielded vessel;
- When a believer or leader is lifted up in spirit and ministers the word of God by prophetic illumination and speaks directly to the needs of the people present;
- When a believer or leader inwardly senses through the Spirit the specific spiritual or physical needs of a congregation in a church service, and ministers to them;
- When a believer's whole being (spirit, mind, will, emotions and body) responds positively to the wooing of the Holy Spirit.

The above examples are not exhaustive as the Holy Spirit moves in several ways depending on the need of the congregation and the submission of the leader to His promptings.

Anointing and Character

Leaders should understand that God is as interested in developing the gifts of the Spirit in their lives as developing the fruit of the Spirit. Character is so essential to enjoy God's greater anointing and blessings. God desires a balance between character (integrity) and ability (power) in every leader's ministry. Both character and anointing (divine ability) are essential to perform the Lord's ministry effectively. One of the qualifications for ministry is character and integrity (1Timothy 3:1-7; Acts 6:3). Whenever a person steps beyond scriptural guidelines for moral character and conduct, he disqualifies himself from ministry (James 1:12-17).

Conclusion

Many leaders today are wandering in the wilderness of despair and unfruitfulness on their way to the Promised Land. As long as God's daily Presence (the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night) is there, be assured that you are on your way to fulfilment and success. You can be going through difficulties in service, but on the way to fulfil your mission as leader, for example, David, Joseph, etc. The key thing is 'Is God with you? Are you walking with Him? Are you operating within His will?' etc.

Many people today want to lead without first learning to follow. We must learn to follow the great Master and Lord Jesus Christ in humility, submission, faith, love and character before we can lead His people.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: **EVANGELISM & CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

LESSON 1: **INTRODUCTION & DEFINITIONS**

COURSE TEACHER: **BISHOP EKONG**

Introduction: - Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 1:8; Proverbs 11:30

The last command of our Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples or His close followers was to preach the gospel to every creature, to every nation, and to make those who believe to become His disciples by teaching them His commandments.

Not everyone is an evangelist or a preacher by calling but every believer is called to evangelize, or at least be a witness of Jesus Christ by declaring to others what God has done in their lives (*1Peter 3:15-16; 2Timothy 4:5; John 4:28-29, 39; Acts 1:8*).

Who is a witness?

A witness is one who has a first-hand information or knowledge about something and has been asked to declare, testify or confirm what he has seen, heard or experienced (*Acts 4:18-20, 31; Proverbs 14:5, 25*)

Who is an evangelist?

An evangelist is one who evangelizes, declares, proclaims, preaches or shares the good news. The good news is same as the gospel and it is about the Kingdom of God and salvation through Jesus Christ alone. An evangelist, in this context, is not just the office as defined in Ephesians 4:11 but also the function or work that is required of all believers in Christ (*2Timothy 4:5*).

Types of Evangelism

There are various forms of evangelism adopted by individuals, churches and organisations throughout the world. The commonest forms are explained below and can be adopted and adapted by anyone, depending on which is most effective under various circumstances. Jesus Christ, the greatest Evangelist of all, adopted most of these forms – open-air meetings, door-to-door, friendship, roadsides, social outreaches, etc.

Every adopted form of evangelism must be dependent and led by the Holy Spirit for effectiveness and fruitfulness.

1. Crusades & Open-Air meetings

These meetings are intended to gather people for evangelism (*Acts 2:5-16, 37-42*). It is often advertised in the press and the broadcast media. The intention is to have a large percentage of unsaved in the crowd with a possible target of a particular age, economic, or cultural group.

Strong emphasis is on music ministry, testimonies as well as preaching. It also includes emphasis on healing and deliverance. The message is aimed at convicting the sinner and stirring the saints.

Altar call, prayer and counselling ministry are usually expected at the meeting. Provision must be made for follow-up of new believers. Practical ideas about follow-up will be covered in the next lesson.

The key essential for this form of evangelism to succeed and yield results is adequate preparation. What this means is Planning, Planning, and Planning.

2. **Friendship Evangelism**

This involves showing the love of God through being a caring friend. It could be neighbour to neighbour, fellow worker, or school mate. It requires much effort and time because it involves building a relationship of trust and care. Numbers of converts are usually smaller than with some other forms of evangelism but lasting results are greater because of relationship and follow-up.

Statistics show that over 70% of people that come to faith in Christ did so through one to one evangelism to friends and relatives.

3. **Street Ministry, Tracts & Personal Witnessing**

This involves going on the street, to public gathering places, sporting events, town squares, or shopping centres (*Matthew 9:35-38; 10:1, 5-16*). The format can include preaching, singing, drama, mime, or simply speaking to people personally.

It requires preparation, training and well-chosen gospel tracts and literature. This type of evangelism is more effective if working in teams rather than alone. Provision should be made for follow up.

4. **Door-to-Door Canvassing**

This involves teams going door to door to witness for Christ covering a chosen community or neighbourhood (*Luke 10:1-12; Acts 20:20*). These teams offer practical assistance, spiritual ministry, prayer, and counselling or encouragement. The use of well-chosen literature or tracts is very important.

Some churches or ministries have a printed brochure which describes the range of ministries offered by the church including their meeting schedules. These may be helpful.

It is important that allowance must be made for flexibility and stamina to deal with a variety of situations and responses during evangelism. **Never go alone on door-to-door ministry!** A male-female team can be helpful when invited into a home for discussion or ministry.

It is important to keep a record of responses and arrange for follow up to maximise the effectiveness of this form of outreach.

5. **Sports Evangelism**

This is usually done by Christian athletes involved in popular sports. For example, Christians in secular teams or Christian teams in secular leagues. They provide an example of Christian sportsmanship, witness for Christ, and structured opportunities to speak about Jesus Christ.

6. **Children and Youth Clubs**

This is usually a Christian oriented activity for children or teens that involve them in fun and social activities. They offer alternatives to the street and its ungodly

activities, share with them the love of God and salvation available in Jesus Christ. This can be set up in neighbourhoods, ghetto areas, Children's homes and rural communities.

7. Self-Help & Vocational Training

This form of evangelism taps into developmental needs, unemployment, illiteracy, lack of marketable job skills among the people and are tremendous opportunities for the church to minister (*Acts 18:1-4*). This could involve self-help projects, vocational training, literacy classes, on-the-job training by Christian businessmen and women, and enlisting help from Christians and organisations.

Creative ideas and a commitment to follow through are the keys to success.

8. Social Outreach

It is often difficult to reach certain people if they have material or physical needs. Christians are to be involved in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, and visiting the sick and imprisoned (*Matthew 25:31-40*). This type of ministry forms part of an on-going involvement of the church in the society. This can include soup kitchens, food and clothes distribution, homes for children and for adults, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, prison ministries, care and counselling for abused women and children, health clinics in rural or depressed urban areas. The possibilities are unlimited.

This form of social outreach must be learned from those already involved in this type of ministry for useful ideas and lessons.

9. Drama

Drama can be used in church settings and on the street in secular settings. For evangelism, Jesus Christ and the principles of the Kingdom may be used to deal with issues of everyday life. It should not be merely 'entertaining' but effort should be made to be real and realistic dealing with real life issues. As much as possible, strive for excellence in the presentation of the drama.

10. Music Outreach

Music that is intended to minister to Christians especially in Church can be in the form of inspiration, comfort, challenge, and praise and worship. Whereas music that is intended for outreach and evangelism should deal with life issues and presenting the reality of Jesus Christ. It should be skilfully presented in contemporary style. The music style must fit the intended audience to be effective. Strive for skill, quality and excellence. As much as is practicable, use quality or serviced equipment.

This type of outreach can be used in crusades, street meetings, concerts, schools and children's homes, and in conjunction with drama.

11. Internet & Social Media

This is another opportunity of using technology to reach people with the gospel and can come in the form of literature or gospel messages sent online either through a website or social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, GooglePlus, Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, Godtube, etc. It is possible to use these alongside with or to promote the other forms of evangelism already described.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: **EVANGELISM & CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

LESSON 2: **EVANGELISM IN PRACTICE**

COURSE TEACHER: **BISHOP EKONG**

Introduction: - 2Timothy 4:2; John 4:34-38; Matthew 9:35-38; John 16:7-14; 3:1-21

In lesson 1, we looked at the various types of evangelism and the fact that every believer in Christ is called to be a witness for Christ and to do the work of an evangelist.

In this lesson, we will be studying the various aspects of actually putting this into practice and what is involved in evangelism.

The following topics will be covered:

- a) Preparing for evangelism
- b) Leading a soul to Christ
- c) Salvation Plans
- d) Follow up methods and materials

A) Preparing for Evangelism

Evangelism is a spiritual battle to save the lost from the power of sin controlled by the devil and his demons (*2Corinthians 4:3-4; 10:3-6; Ephesians 2:1-3*). The devil not only blocks the sinner from seeing the light of the gospel but resists the believer in his efforts to share the gospel. It therefore requires adequate preparation to save souls.

We need to bear in mind also that as we make efforts to share the gospel, people will often object to or make excuses for rejecting the gospel. Some of the reasons are:

- 1. They love darkness and do not want to be exposed – *John 3:19-21; Ephesians 5:13*
- 2. They cannot understand spiritual things – *1Corinthians 2:14*
- 3. The devil blinds their minds so that they cannot believe the gospel – *2Corinthians 4:3-4*

The following are the main essentials for preparation:

- 1. Pray for boldness to share the gospel (*Acts 4:29-31; Ephesians 6:18-19*). Through prayer, deal with personal inhibitions and difficulties, such as;
 - i) I lack confidence that the Lord will speak through me
 - ii) I am shy and afraid of people (*2Timothy 1:7-8*)
 - iii) I fear rejection (*Jeremiah 1:6-9*)
 - iv) I don't know how to start a conversation about spiritual issues
 - v) I am not sure how to guide a discussion to the Bible
 - vi) I can't imagine that some people would even care to listen to what I have to say.
- 2. Pray also for the sinners that they would be open to the gospel (*Acts 26:17-18; 2Corinthians 4:4*)
- 3. Have compassion for the lost (*Matthew 9:36-38*). Be motivated by love to share the gospel and not by guilt (*2Corinthians 5:11-15*). Hate sin but love the sinner. Don't present a 'holier-than-thou' attitude.

4. Remember that the power for salvation is in the gospel (*Romans 1:16*). We cannot 'convert' or 'win' a soul, because it is the Holy Spirit that convicts and converts (*John 16:8-11; 6:44; 1Corinthians 3:6-7*). 'Gospel' means 'Good News' of reconciliation, hope, grace, forgiveness, and eternal life.
5. Have a salvation plan which is Bible-based and be familiar with its use (See examples in Section C). However, be flexible in the presentation of the gospel.
6. Always carry a Bible with you (if possible a small, compact pocket Bible), a little notebook and a pen for jotting down observations or contact details.
7. Be led by the Holy Spirit (*Acts 8:26-29; 16:6-10*)
8. Have a personal living testimony of a growing relationship with Christ.

B) Leading a soul to Christ

The quality of a person's conversion depends to a large extent on the quality of the gospel as presented. The whole gospel therefore demands a full response. Therefore;

1. Don't weaken the message (*Galatians 1:8-10; 1Corinthians 2:4-5*)
2. Don't be ashamed of or make excuses for the gospel (*Romans 1:16; Mark 8:38*)
3. The message should be God-centred and not man-centred, that is,
 - a) Man-centred message focuses on the person's needs or problems. For example, "Accept Jesus Christ and He will solve all your problems".
 - b) God-centred gospel focuses on the holiness of God and man's sinful condition. It focuses on the availability of God's grace and mercy to forgive sins. Confession and repentance from sin are therefore necessary for salvation.
4. Don't confuse people with 'spiritual jargons'. **Use a language or words that people can understand.** Avoid phrases like 'Born again', 'Ask Jesus in', 'Accept Christ', 'Washed in the blood', etc. They won't know what you are talking about (See an example in *John 3:1-11*).
5. Use simple and practical ways to open a conversation to the gospel. For example, you can start by asking the following questions:
 - a) Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?
 - b) Who do you think Jesus is?
 - c) Do you think there is a heaven or hell?
 - d) If you died right now, where would you go?
 - e) If what you believe were not true, would you want to know it?
6. Try to relate the gospel message to the person's situation or interests, or to current events. For example, Jesus and the Samaritan woman and their common need of water (*John 4*).
7. Don't be afraid to ask people to make a commitment to Christ. This is referred to as 'Closing the deal'. (See helpful ideas after Salvation Plans in Section C).
8. Your testimony is a valuable witnessing tool. Use it.

C) Salvation Plans

The following are three simple methods or plans for leading a soul to Christ. Learn any one of them that works for you and be confident with its use.

1. How to become a Christian

- i) You must recognise your NEED
Isaiah 53:6; 64:6; Romans 3:23; 6:23; John 3:3-6
- ii) You must be aware of God's PROVISION
Romans 6:23; John 3:16-18; Titus 3:4-5; 1Peter 2:24; 3:18
- iii) You must RESPOND to God's grace
Acts 16:30-31; 2:37-39; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9
- iv) You must receive the ASSURANCE of salvation
2Corinthians 5:17; John 6:37; Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:19; 1John 4:15-16

2. The Roman Road

- i) Man's NEED - Romans 3:23
- ii) Sin's PENALTY - Romans 6:23
- iii) God's PROVISION - Romans 5:8
- iv) Man's RESPONSE - Romans 10:9-10

3. Steps to Peace with God (as used by Billy Graham Ministries)

- i) Every man is a sinner, lost and condemned
Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:3; Romans 6:23
- ii) Man cannot save himself
Titus 3:4-5; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9
- iii) God loves man and made a way through Jesus Christ
John 3:16; Romans 6:23; 5:1, 8; John 10:10; 1Peter 3:18
- iv) Every man must respond
Revelations 3:20; John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10

Closing the Deal

After sharing any of the salvation plans, it is important to close the deal. 'Closing the deal' is a call for a decision after presentation of a salvation plan. The following steps can be adopted which takes the form of questions:

- i) Do you now recognize that you are a sinner?
- ii) Do you want God's forgiveness of your sins?
- iii) Do you believe Jesus died on the cross for you and rose again?
- iv) Are you willing to surrender yourself to Jesus Christ as your Lord?
- v) Are you ready to invite Jesus Christ into your heart and into your life?

If the person is able to answer 'Yes' to each of the above questions, you can then guide him or her through a sinner's prayer as suggested below:

*"Father, I thank You for the free gift of eternal life.
I know I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness.
I am sorry for my past sins, and I ask You to forgive me.
Lord Jesus, I believe You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead.
I now open the door of my heart and invite You to come into my life.
I realise there is nothing I can do to earn my salvation, and I place my complete trust in You alone for eternal life.
I chose to follow You as my Lord and Saviour.
Please make me the person You want me to be.
In Jesus' Name I pray. AMEN!"*

The next step would be as discussed in Section D under Follow-up.

Write down in your notebook the convert's contact details – name, home address, phone number, email address (if he has it), gender, and any prayer requests.

D) Follow-up methods and materials

It is always exciting when, in the course of witnessing or evangelism, someone decides to give his or her life to Christ (*Luke 15:10*). The difficulty lies in following up the person, that is, getting the person to go on with God and be integrated into the life of a local church.

Billy Graham once said that 'decision is 5%, following up the decision is 95%'. It is one thing to give birth to a baby but it takes a lot of effort, patience and time to nurture, care, and build up the baby to maturity. Without proper care the child may die.

The same thing goes for a young convert. Without an effective and proper follow-up, the convert slips out of our hands and all the effort of getting the person to Christ becomes a waste.

We have been called to 'make disciples' and NOT 'decision-makers' (*Matthew 28:19*). Every effort must be made to ensure that our 'fruit remain' (*John 15:16*). Follow-up should therefore be seen and taken as the most important part of evangelism. A conversion that lasts is partly the result of an effective follow-up.

The new convert and a baby

For an effective follow-up, it is important to imagine a young convert as a new-born baby and what you would likely do when a baby is born. From the following statements below, we can see similarities with a young convert:

1. There is joy everywhere when a baby is born (*Luke 15:10*)
2. When the baby comes into a new environment it cries because it feels uncomfortable. It should be kept warm and comfortable.
3. Preparations are made for the new-born baby in the form of clothes, cot, toiletries, food, etc.
4. The baby cannot take care of itself. It is totally dependent on the parents or guardians. It needs loving and tender care.
5. The baby cannot reason like an adult. It cannot also be made or forced to understand what adults do. A good and patient understanding of the baby is essential.
6. The baby cannot eat solid food but milk. It has to be weaned as it grows up (*Hebrews 5:13-14*). It also has to be fed regularly for it to grow (*1 Peter 2:2*).
7. Regular communication with the baby is essential for proper growth.

Practical ideas for follow-up

1. Be willing to commit yourself to the responsibility of disciplining people for Christ by;
 - Showing genuine love and concern for them
 - Listening to their heart
 - Being patient, flexible and forgiving
 - Being firm about right and wrong
 - Teaching them to live by God's word
2. Phone up or contact the new convert within 24 hours of him or her making a decision and pay a visit to his or her home within the first few days. Be sure to have a proper name, address and telephone number. Early contact is essential for encouragement and assurance. Subsequent visits should be arranged and complied with.
3. Immediately, begin to invite and involve the disciple in fellowship and spiritual activity. Bring or escort the person to church and home fellowships. Be gentle. Do not pressurize, but be persistent.
4. The disciple should be encouraged to read the Bible daily and to pray regularly.
5. Pray for the disciple regularly and encourage him or her.
6. Never drop the disciple. Discipleship is a commitment on both parties.

7. Lead the disciple to Christ and not to yourself. Don't allow the disciple to depend too much on you.
8. Recognise your limitations and where necessary refer the disciple to someone else.
9. Avoid disciplining members of the opposite sex.
10. Be an example in every way.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
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ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: EVANGELISM & CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

LESSON 3: DISCIPLESHIP

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: - Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 14:25-33; 6:43-49

A disciple simply means a learner, a student or one who follows both the teacher and his teachings. This term is mostly used with reference to believers in Christ, both those who believed during His life on earth, and those who later joined the Early Church.

The term 'disciple' was first used in the New Testament and mostly in the Gospels and in Acts of the Apostles. It was not applied to the disciples of Christ only but also to those of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:1-4; Mark 2:18), Moses (John 9:27-29), Pharisees (Mark 2:18), etc.

The 12 Apostles of Christ were mostly known as the 12 disciples, but Christ had more than 12 when He walked the surface of the earth (Acts 1:15; 1Corinthians 15:3-8). It was from this large number of disciples that He chose 12 to be His inner circle whom He named as Apostles (Luke 6:12-17).

Discipleship is not limited to new or young believers, as is the practice in many churches today but extends to every believer in Christ whether young, old, new, or mature. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, every believer is referred to as a disciple of Christ (Acts 1:15; 6:1-7; 9:1-2, 10, 25-26). It was at the church in Antioch that believers were first called 'Christians' (Acts 11:25-26). To be called a 'Christian' in those days was intended to be disrespectful or in contempt of the disciples. It was derogatory and spiteful and not necessarily a good thing to be called a 'Christian'. However, among believers, they always refer to themselves as being disciples rather than Christians (Acts 16:1; 19:1-10).

The cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33; Matthew 16:24-27)

Discipleship does not start and end with just believing and receiving Jesus Christ into your life as your personal Lord and Saviour. It is a life-long commitment to faith in Him, to be more like Him in character and service. The Great Commission was a command to make disciples of all nations and to teach them to observe all the teachings and commands of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

Unfortunately, emphasis and focus in many churches today has shifted from discipleship to church membership. Salvation is for all (Luke 14:16-24) but discipleship is for those willing to commit (Luke 14:26-33). Church membership will not lead to eternal life but discipleship will. Church membership remains with church register, which will perish in fire but discipleship has an eternal record in the Book of Life.

The early disciples of Christ were always with Christ, learning by observing, hearing and following His examples, actions and teachings (John 13:12-17; 1Peter 2:21-25). Christ

was their model for living the life of God. The same applies to us today (Ephesians 4:13; Hebrews 12:1-4; 2Corinthians 3:17-18).

The Lord shared a great deal of confident information with His early disciples, teaching them things that others outside of the circle were unaware of (Matthew 16:20-21; 24:1-3; Mark 4:33-34). This shows that true disciples will receive deep revelations of the heart and purposes of God and will seek to obey and to promote it (Luke 6:40; 1Corinthians 2:9-12; Romans 8:14-17).

A) Matthew 16:24-27

Discipleship requires a commitment and a willingness to die, if need be, for what you believe.

In Matthew 16:24-27, Jesus Christ explains to His disciples what it means to be a disciple. To lose your life is to find it; to die is to live. To deny oneself is not to assume some false, external and rigorous self denial of pleasures, but to put the interests of the kingdom first and foremost in one's life.

To take up the cross does not mean to endure some irritating burden, but to denounce or crucify self-centred ambitions and passions. Such sacrifice results in eternal life and the fullest experience of kingdom life now (Mark 10:28-30).

B) Luke 14:25-33

In this passage, Jesus Christ made some difficult statements, which many people have wrongly given all kinds of interpretations.

In verse 26, what He meant was that to be His disciple, all earthly relationships must take second place behind loyalty to Him. It does not imply that we hate our family members or bear them any ill will but chose Christ over all others.

In verse 27, what this means is that a disciple must die to self-centredness and be willing to endure suffering or even martyrdom for His sake (John 15:18-20; 1Peter 3:13-18; 4:1, 12-19; 2Timothy 3:12).

Verses 28-32 illustrate the fact that erecting a building is costly and waging war is dangerous. Therefore, a disciple of Christ must count the cost first and understand too that it takes a lot of sacrifice and commitment to be a disciple. It is not a casual type of identification with Christ.

Verse 33 simply summarises what it means to be a disciple. It demands renouncing totally all selfish interests for the sake of Christ. It demands total commitment and realisation of Christ's purpose for our lives.

The marks of a true disciple

To follow Christ and be His disciple requires:

1. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16)
2. Self denial of sinful passions (Matthew 16:24-26)
3. Willingness to sacrifice and to suffer for Him (carrying your cross)
4. Sincere love for one another (John 13:34-35)
5. Bearing fruits for God (John 15:8)

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: PRAYER & INTERCESSION

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: Luke 11:1-13

Prayer is at the heart of Christian living and it is the life-blood of any believer or Church. It is the main link and form of communication between a believer and God, without which he or she cannot function or exist. Our Lord Jesus started His ministry on earth with prayer (*Luke 4:1-2*) and ended it in prayer (*Luke 23:46*). After His resurrection from the dead and ascension into glory, He continues with this vital ministry of prayer and intercession, and particularly for our sakes (*Hebrews 7:23-25*).

The importance and value of prayer resonates throughout the Bible with many examples and commands to pray.

Yet, prayer appears to be one of the Christian disciplines that is difficult to practice by believers. One often wonders why this is the case. The questions then are:

What is prayer?

Why should we pray?

What are the benefits of prayer?

Why is it difficult to pray?

What makes it difficult to pray and how can we overcome it?

What can we do to cultivate the practice of prayer?

The disciples of Jesus Christ had a problem in that department and they came to the right person who practiced and experienced the power in prayer. They asked the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 11:1, "Lord, teach us to pray". The Lord responded by teaching them the essentials or patterns of prayer, as in the "Lord's Prayer". This implies that prayer can be taught.

We will look at some of the basic principles and patterns of prayer as we go through this course.

What is prayer?

1. Prayer is simply a conversation or communication with God (*Exodus 33:7-11; Matthew 14:22-23*)
2. It can be expressed in praise, thanksgiving, supplication and intercession (*1Timothy 2:1-4*)
3. It is the means by which we seek the unlimited resources of heaven to meet the needs of a limited people (*Philippians 4:19; John 16:23-24*)
4. It is a spiritual warfare (*Ephesians 6:10-13, 18-20; 2Corinthians 10:3-6*)

What is intercession?

1. It is to plead with someone on behalf of another (*Exodus 32:11-14; Hebrews 7:23-25*)
2. It is to act as a mediator, a go-between, a reconciler, an arbitrator or advocate for someone else (*1John 2:1-2; Hebrews 2:14-18*)
3. It is to stand in the gap between judgement and mercy (*Psalms 106:23; Ezekiel 22:23-31*)
4. It is to help carry the burden of another in order to alleviate them from suffering and pain (*Romans 8:26-27*)

Interactive Session

Discuss practical constraints to prayer and intercession.

How do we overcome these constraints and difficulties?

- Tiredness
- Laziness
- Timidity & fear of people
- Lack of time
- Lack of interest
- Lack of knowledge or understanding

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: PRAYER & INTERCESSION

LESSON 2: ATTITUDES TO PRAYER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: Luke 18:1-17; 1John 5:14-15

In Lesson 1, we took our study from Luke 11 where the Lord Himself gave us patterns of prayer. In this lesson, we will look at attitudes to prayer – good and wrong attitudes. There are several examples in the Bible but we will be looking at some basic principles, which if correctly applied will help us a great deal in our prayer life.

Prayer & Relationship with God

How we pray and the effectiveness of our prayers will depend on the level of intimacy and relationship we have developed with God.

The very essence of prayer is communication with God. Regular communication with Him strengthens our bond of relationship or fellowship with Him, our understanding of Him, and our true devotion to Him. It is what builds our faith and our confidence to confront the challenges of life and of demonic forces and powers of darkness (*James 4:7-8; John 11:39-44; Revelation 12:11*).

Sincere prayer comes from a good relationship with God and it should never be like a formula or a magic potion that we have to repeat in a certain way, with the hope that we can twist God's hands to meet our needs (*Matthew 6:7*).

When we get to the stage where our relationship with God is deep, prayer becomes very effective (*John 15:7*). It is not manipulative because it is based on a relationship, knowing and understanding what the will of the Lord is (*1John 5:14-15*). We do not force our will against His but working in partnership with His revealed will. When we know what the will of the Lord is, we can be confident in faith knowing that He will answer because He has promised that He will do (*Numbers 23:19*).

What we face on a daily basis are not just natural challenges but supernatural. Therefore, we need the unlimited resources available in God (His wisdom, guidance, protection, strength, provisions, assurances, favour, blessings, and many others) to help meet our needs.

Review of Luke 18

There are people (believers and unbelievers) who have sought communion with God and failed, while others have succeeded. The Bible gives us several examples of how we should pray and how not to pray, the hindrances to answered prayer, various forms of

prayer, postures and attitudes in prayer. We will be looking at these in subsequent lessons.

We can learn some few things from the passage in Luke 18 about attitudes to prayer:

1. Persistence in prayer & never giving up (*Luke 18:1, 7-8, 35-43; 11:5-8*)
2. Faith in God to answer prayer and not doubting (*James 1:5-8; Hebrews 11:6*)
3. Prayer according to God's will (the woman sought for justice) (*Luke 18:3; 1John 5:14-15; 3John 2; Romans 8:27; James 4:1-3*) – The will of God is the desires of God & what pleases Him – righteousness, justice, love & faith.
4. Avoid self-righteousness or drawing attention to yourself (*Luke 18:9-12; Isaiah 64:6; Hebrews 10:19-22; Ephesians 2:8-9*)
5. Prayer does not have to be long. It can be short and straight to the point (*Luke 18:13; Matthew 6:5-8*)
6. Do not attempt to manipulate God in prayer by using shortcuts and formulas. Pray in line with His will and promises and He will hear you (*Luke 18:12; 1John 5:14-15*).
7. Humility and sincerity in prayer (*Luke 18:13; 1Peter 5:5-6; James 4:6-10; 2Chronicles 7:14; Micah 6:8*)
8. Come before the Lord in true reverence and respect (*Psalms 89:7; Proverbs 14:27; Hebrews 12:28-29*)

In the next couple of lessons, we will deal with postures in prayer, hindrances to answered prayer, and the various levels of prayer.

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SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: PRAYER & INTERCESSION

LESSON 3: POSTURES IN PRAYER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction:

The question people ask always is whether it matters if we sit, stand, walk, drive, kneel or lie down to pray. Should we close our eyes, open our eyes, bow or raise our heads, fold or raise hands up in prayer? Is there an acceptable or Biblical way to pray or should we choose what is convenient for us?

We must be careful however that in seeking to exercise the freedom to adopt different postures in prayer, we should never use postures of other Religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, etc or those used in meditation such as yoga, etc.

Although prayer is something that is done from the heart, physical posture is an important part of prayer. If words are what you say in prayer, then posture is like how you say it. Physical posture helps to posture our hearts and minds as we pray.

The Bible gives us several examples and varieties of postures in prayer. We can adopt whatever suits us or choose a combination of Biblical examples. Sometimes people adopt certain postures instinctively, and which relates directly to their spiritual moods at the time. There is no use being religious about religion or surrounding our faith with rituals, but to seek to explore the various ways we can approach our heavenly Father in love, sincerity, faith, and in spirit.

The many examples in Scripture of various postures used in prayers tell us of the freedom of expression available to us to use.

1. Standing with hands uplifted and open, heads and eyes lifted up (John 17:1; Luke 9:28-32; 1Timothy 2:8; Job 30:20)

This is the oldest posture of prayer. By praying this way, the believer acknowledges God as external and transcendent and the object of our worship. When we extend our hands especially in worship, it symbolizes our surrender to the Lord.

Hands lifted up and open is a posture of receptivity. We position ourselves to receive what God wants to give His people – His love, unmerited grace, peace, joy, healing, etc.

The posture is used mostly for thanksgiving, blessings, benedictions, and general prayers.

2. Standing with hands clasped at the chest and head bowed (Luke 18:10-13; 1Kings 8:22; 1Samuel 1:26; Mark 11:25)

This posture is for submissive petitions, intercessory prayers and prayers of repentance.

3. Kneeling either with heads up, eyes and hands lifted and open or with heads down, eyes closed and hands clasped (Matthew 18:26; Luke 22:41-44; Daniel 6:10)

This is the traditional posture for requesting favours from a king. It is a traditional posture for prayers of repentance or supplication.

The posture of kneeling, coupled with a humble heart is the most powerful position on earth. Humility honours God and God honours humility.

Other Bible passages to read is 1Kings 8:54; 2Chronicles 6:13; Ezra 9:5; Acts 9:40; 20:36; 21:5; Ephesians 3:14.

4. Lying on the floor or bed (Psalms 4:4; 63:6)

It is used when someone is sick in bed or lying in bed during the night to meditate on the Lord.

5. Prostrating or crouching low, or bowing down to the ground

This is when people place their body fully on the ground with their faces on it and with outstretched hands.

It is a posture of worship, an expression of homage and submission to God (2Chronicles 20:18; Genesis 24:52; Numbers 20:6).

It is also a traditional posture for desperate, repentant and intercessory prayer (Matthew 26:38-39; Mark 14:35).

6. Sitting, heads down and hands clasped or folded (Judges 20:26; Nehemiah 1:4)

In 2Samuel 7:18, King David sat to pray. This is not a very common posture but it is acceptable. It is a posture of someone seeking instructions from the Lord or through His prophet (2Kings 4:38; Ezekiel 8:1; 33:31).

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SUBJECT: PRAYER & INTERCESSION

LESSON 4: LEVELS OF PRAYER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 11:5-13)

God welcomes prayer and He wants us to pray, to talk to Him. This is the only means by which we can commune with God and build up a relationship with Him.

Prayer is also God's appointed means for us to receive what we need from Him.

Not all prayer is alike in its basic nature. The passage we read in Matthew 7:7-11 describes to us 3 levels of prayer. Sometimes we are asking, sometimes we are seeking and some other times our prayers are like knocking at the doors of heaven.

Jesus asks us to Ask, Seek & Knock. In the Greek language, those words of Jesus simply means to keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking at the door. This means that prayer requires persistence (Luke 11:5-8).

Few prayers are answered the first time we pray them. God's delays do not mean that He doesn't care. We are to ask, ask, and keep on asking. We are to seek, seek, and keep on seeking. We are to knock, knock and keep on knocking. If we do, we will receive, find, and the door will be opened to us.

God's Promise (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 11:9-13)

How can we be so sure that when we ask, seek, and knock that we will receive, find, and the door opened to us? Jesus says that our hope in prayer rests not with ourselves or in the power of positive thinking, but in the very character of God who is our great Father in heaven. Each level of prayer is tied to a promise by God to answer.

God wants to answer our prayers but our prayers will not necessarily be answered immediately. It would require taking it to the next level or persist in asking.

In Matthew 7:9-11, God gives us an assurance of answered prayers by asking a moral question. Good fathers would not give their children a stone for bread or a snake for fish. If they cannot do that, although evil in nature, how much more God who is loving by nature. We often answer 'No' to our children when they ask us things in ignorance, even when they persist or insist. We deny them not because we hate them but because we love them. We often ask God for things that would not help us even though they appear good to us (Proverbs 21:2; 16:2). God sees through our requests and knows if they will harm us or do us good (Proverbs 16:1-3, 9, 33; 19:21).

God knows much more than we do.

God cares much more than we do.

Level 1 - Asking (Matthew 7:7-8)

“Ask, and it will be given to you For everyone who asks receives”.

Asking is what beggars or children do. Beggars are usually bold when they ask for money and sometimes their boldness can be irritating and you are forced to give to get rid of them. If we are to be in the position of the beggars, we would probably be bold to make demands of those who have more than we do.

Asking is a level 1 type of prayer where prayer involves a petition for the basic needs of life such as food, money, guidance, protection, etc. Philippians 4:6 encourages us to make our requests known to God.

Asking is a position of helplessness or inability where you need someone else to help you solve a problem. Young children are incapable of doing certain things and they would therefore request assistance or provision from their parents or from adults (Hebrews 5:13; 1Corinthians 13:11).

There is nothing wrong with this level of prayer unless we move to the next level. The danger of staying at this level is that if we don't see immediate results in prayer, we become weary and discouraged and our prayer life soon disappears over time.

Level 2 - Seeking (Matthew 7:7-8)

“Seek, and you will find And he who seeks finds”.

Seeking implies a desire for something of greater value, or a search for deeper understanding. It could be a search for solution, answer, or for what you desire until you find it. You become dissatisfied with what you have or know and you then decide to re-arrange your priorities so that you can search for what you desire. It takes time and effort (Luke 15:3-10). It could even involve fasting (Matthew 17:19-21; 2Chronicles 20:3-4; Daniel 10:1-3, 10-13).

Sometimes when we don't understand why things happen or the reasons for the trials we face, we search for a deeper understanding. Paul, for example in 2Corinthians 12:7-10, asked the Lord 3 times to remove a thorn in his flesh and 3 times the Lord said 'No'. He followed the first level, and when that did not work, he went to the second level by seeking the Lord. He then understood the reason for the 'No' answer, which he stated clearly in the first part of verse 7. He became satisfied with God's response as in verses 9 & 10. He gained spiritual insight into the purposes of God for Him.

(Other Bible references: Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29:12-14; 1Chronicles 16:10-11; 28:9; 2Chronicles 7:14)

Level 3 - Knocking (Matthew 7:7-8)

“Knock, and it will be opened to you And to him who knocks it will be opened”.

To knock means, to stand at the door and rap repeatedly with your hands or with an object.

The door is like a hindrance, a closed gate or entrance, a resistance, which prevents access. You are sure of what is on the other side of the door and you are determined to have it without giving up. You keep on praying in the face of difficulty and resistance until the door is opened.

This can be compared to spiritual warfare where you strive or wrestle until the battle is won (e.g. Paul in Romans 15:30-32 and Jacob in Genesis 32:22-29).

This level of prayer can be directed towards God when seeking His favour or for open doors of ministry, a change of heart of a loved one or for the salvation of lost souls. Sometimes it requires reminding God to fulfil His promises as revealed in His word and laying hold on it until it done.

This level of prayer can also be directed against the devil and his demonic forces by taking authority over their activities or pulling down their strongholds of resistance or opposition to God and His people (2Corinthians 10:3-6; Ephesians 6:10-13; Revelations 12:10-11; Luke 10:19).

Fasting is often associated with this level of prayer, although may not be required if a firm relationship has been established with the Lord.

Intercessors or prayer warriors operate at this level of prayer. They know how to pray and what to pray for. A high level of spiritual maturity, wisdom and understanding of the Lord and of His word is required to operate at this level of prayer.

Conclusion

May the Lord help us to grow in all dimensions of prayer to the point where we could sense His presence, hear His voice and experience a strong powerful and mutually beneficial relationship with Him. Amen!

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SUBJECT: PRAYER & INTERCESSION

LESSON 5: FASTING & PRAYER

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

Introduction: (Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 6:14-18; Joel 2:12-19)

Fasting is a period of voluntary denial or abstinence from all food or specific items. Fasting is not dieting, hunger strike, starvation or efforts at losing weight.

Dieting is denying the flesh for physical purposes.

Fasting is the process of bringing spiritual and physical discipline to one's life by denying the flesh and feeding the spirit. It is a time set aside to mourn or to pray with no provision for normal food or recreation needs. It is often referred to, in the Bible, as 'afflicting the soul', 'denying self' or 'mourning' (Psalms 35:13; 69:10; Joel 2:12).

Fasting is an action contrary to that first act of sin in the human race, which was eating what was forbidden. Fasting is refusing to eat what is allowed!

Fasting is the most powerful spiritual discipline of all the Christian disciplines. Through fasting and prayer, one's life can be transformed and God's awesome power released through the enabling of the Holy Spirit (1Samuel 7:9-12; Matthew 17:19-21; Mark 9:25-29).

Unfortunately, fasting is one of the most neglected spiritual admonitions. It is hoped that through this study, we can begin to explore and to experience the great benefits of regular fasts.

A major reason for fasting is for personal revival, revival for our nation, for the world and for the fulfilment of the Great Commission. But praying for our own needs and interceding for others are also important reasons to fast and pray. You can bring your personal needs before the Lord; intercede for your loved ones, your friends, your church, your pastor, your community, your nation, and the world. By your prayers of humility, as you fast, you will help the Great Commission be fulfilled.

However, do not become so caught up in praying for yourself and others that you forget about simply reverencing and praising God. True spiritual fasting focuses on God. Centre your total being on Him, your attitudes, your actions, your motives, desires, and words. This can only take place if God and His Holy Spirit are at the centre of our attention. Confess your sins as the Holy Spirit brings them to your attention and continue to focus on God and God alone so that your prayers may be powerful and effective.

Important truths to note about fasting:

Receiving God's blessing from a fast requires solid commitment. Arranging special time each day with God is absolutely crucial in attaining intimate communion with the Father. You must devote yourself to seeking God's face, even (and especially) during those times in which you feel weak, vulnerable, or irritable. Read His Word and pray during what were mealtimes. Meditate on Him when you awake in the night. Sing praises to Him whenever you please. Focus on your Heavenly Father and make every act one of praise and worship. God will enable you to experience His command to "pray without ceasing" as you seek His presence.

As you enter this time of heightened spiritual devotion, be aware that Satan will do everything he can to pull you away from your prayer and Bible reading time. When you feel the enemy trying to discourage you, immediately go to God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen your resolve in the face of difficulties and temptations.

The enemy makes you a target because he knows that fasting is the most powerful of all Christian disciplines and that God may have something very special to show you as you wait upon Him and seek His face. Satan does not want you to grow in your faith, and will do anything from making you hungry and grumpy to bringing up trouble in your family or at work to stop you. Make prayer your shield against such attacks.

A renewed closeness with God and a greater sensitivity to spiritual things are usually the results of a fast. Do not be disappointed if you do not have a "mountaintop experience," as some do. Many people who have successfully completed extended fasts tell of feeling a nearness to God that they have never before known, but others who have honestly sought His face report no particular outward results at all. For others, their fast was physically, emotionally, and spiritually gruelling, but they knew they had been called by God to fast, and they completed the fast unto Him as an act of worship; God honoured that commitment.

Your motive in fasting must be to glorify God, not to have an emotional experience, and not to attain personal happiness. When your motives are right, God will honour your seeking heart and bless your time with Him in a very special way.

Old Testament Examples:

1. Leviticus 23:27-32 - On the day of atonement, to be generally and strictly followed
2. Joshua 7:6 - Joshua prostrating before the ark at the defeat in Ai
3. Judges 20:26-28 - The 11 tribes of Israel in their battle against the tribe of Benjamin
4. 1Samuel 7:6-14 - Israelites when pressed by the Philistines
5. Exodus 34:28 - Moses on Mount Horeb for 40 days and 40 nights
6. 1Kings 19:7-8 - Elijah on the move to Mount Horeb for 40 days and 40 nights
7. Daniel 9:1-4 - Daniel in intercession for Israel

New Testament Examples:

1. Luke 2:36-37 - Prophetess Anna in the temple
2. 2Corinthians 11:27; Acts 14:23 - Apostle Paul practiced regular fasting
3. Matthew 4:1-2 - Our Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights

4. Acts 10:30-31 – Cornelius practiced fasting
5. Luke 5:33-35; Matthew 6:16-18; 1Corinthians 7:5 - Jesus expected His followers to fast and be sincere about it

Why should we fast?

Fasting is important and powerful, and here are some very important facts:

- Fasting was an expected discipline in both the Old and New Testament eras. For example, Moses fasted at least two recorded forty-day periods. Jesus fasted 40 days and reminded His followers to fast, "when you fast," not if you fast.
- Fasting and prayer can restore the loss of the "first love" for your Lord and result in a more intimate relationship with Christ.
- Fasting is a biblical way to truly humble yourself in the sight of God (Psalms 35:13; Ezra 8:21). King David said, "I humble myself through fasting."
- Fasting enables the Holy Spirit to reveal your true spiritual condition, resulting in brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life.
- The Holy Spirit will quicken the Word of God in your heart and His truth will become more meaningful to you!
- Fasting can transform your prayer life into a richer and more personal experience.
- Fasting can result in a dynamic personal revival in your own life, and make you a channel of revival to others.
- Fasting and prayer are the only disciplines that fulfil the requirements of 2Chronicles 7:14 - *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

Fasting humbles you. You will discover more time to pray and seek God's face. And as He leads you to recognize and repent of unconfessed sin, you will experience special blessings from God.

How should we fast?

As you begin your fast, you should protect your health. Fasting that is done properly, will not only prove to be a spiritual blessing, but physical blessing as well.

Before commencing a fast, especially a long one, it may be wise to seek medical advice if you have a physical problem, which could make fasting unwise or dangerous. Also, if you are under any type of medication, make sure you talk to your doctor before changing your regime. Prudence and caution are in order.

In spite of the absolute safety and benefits of fasting, there are certain persons who should NEVER fast without professional supervision. For example:

- Persons who are physically too thin or emaciated
- Those who suffer weakness or anaemia
- Persons who have tumours, bleeding ulcers, cancer, blood diseases, or who have heart disease

- Those who suffer chronic problems with kidneys, liver, lungs, heart, or other important organs
- Individuals who take insulin for diabetes, or suffer any other blood sugar problem
- Women who are pregnant or nursing

What are the various types of fasting and the right type to adopt?

There is no "formula fast" or the only "right" way. Fasting is about the condition of the heart, not the number of days.

It is good to start slowly. Fast for one meal a day, one day a week, or one week a month. Build up your spiritual muscles so that you will be prepared in a period of several months to fast for extended periods such as for 7 days or 40 days.

The Bible Recounts Primarily Two Types of Fasts

A partial fast is described in the book of Daniel. Although the water fast seemed to be the custom of the prophet, there was a three-week period in which he only abstained from "delicacies," meat, and wine (Daniel 10:3).

The two primary types mentioned in the Bible are the "**absolute**" and "**supernatural absolute**" fasts. These are total fasts - no food (solid or liquid) and no water. Paul went on an absolute fast for three days following his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:9). Moses and Elijah engaged in what must be considered a supernatural absolute fast of forty days (Deuteronomy 9:9; I Kings 19:8).

For long fasts, it is important to be led by the Lord.

Water-only fasts that last for more than several days need to be undertaken with complete rest and under medical supervision. Water and juice fasting is recommended for long fasts.

When it comes to making your final decision about what type of fast is right for you, the best advice is to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. He will guide your heart and mind as to what is best for you. Remember, the most important consideration in fasting is your motive. Why are you fasting? To seek something personally from God's hand or to seek His face in worship, praise and thanksgiving?

How to maintain the body during fasting:

How long you fast, the kind of fast you undertake, and how you adjust your work schedule depends mostly on your occupation. Persons with office jobs, pastors, or homemakers may find it easier to continue their duties and fast for longer periods of time. Though there are many who engage in strenuous physical labour and have enjoyed their extended fast. If you are so engaged, you may wish to fast only one or more days of the week, limiting yourselves to partial fasting. Or you may look to weekends as the prime time to abstain from food. Remember too, fasting during major holidays is not always a good idea. Families may be inconvenienced, and temptations to eat can be overwhelming.

Reasons for schedule adjustments, especially during an extended fast, are two-fold:

The first is physical. Throughout your fast, you may feel somewhat weaker than normal. During the first few days, you may feel tired and irritable. Lightening your workload and cutting down on strenuous exercise would be a very good idea to maintain your health and your morale.

The second reason is spiritual. Fasting is not just denying yourself food, it is exchanging the needs of the physical body for those of the spiritual. Long times of prayer and reading God's Word will be very essential if you are to enter into a more intimate communion with God to maintain your fast to its completion. While fasting, if you dissipate your energy on numerous errands or busy work to the neglect of spending special time with God, you will starve both physically and spiritually. You will find yourself becoming discouraged and frustrated with your fast instead of being benefited and uplifted and blessed.

The more time you spend with God in fellowship, worship, and adoration of Him, and the more you read and meditate upon His Word, the greater your effectiveness will be in prayer and the more meaningful your fast will be.

Physical Effects of fasting:

Although fasting can be an indescribable blessing, it is not always easy for everyone. In this time of discipline, self-sacrifice and reflection, do not be surprised if you experience mental and physical discomforts.

To begin, you may experience some inner conflict when you deny yourself the pleasure of eating delicious food. Any sort of fast may sometimes leave you feeling impatient and irritable. During a 3-day fast, this struggle can intensify toward the end of the second day. That seems to be a favourite time for the "self" to rise up and say, "This is as far as I want to go. I have done enough."

The following are few examples of the physical effects of fasting:

1. Hunger Pangs: These are greatest usually during the first three days of the fast. Your body is adjusting from using the food in your digestive tract (which remains about three days) to consuming stored fats.
2. Coldness, bad breath and heightened body odour, changes in elimination (constipation or diarrhoea), light-headedness, changes in sleeping and dreaming patterns, aches and pains.
3. Headaches or stomachaches may be a result of salt, sugar, or caffeine withdrawal.
4. Lower back pain may indicate that you are dehydrating. Drink more fluids.
5. Dizziness may be caused by a sudden change in position, such as rising suddenly from a chair. Stop for a second or two, then recover. Move slowly.
6. Minor fasting discomfort

During your fast, you may have your struggles, discomforts, spiritual victories, and failures. In the morning you may feel like you are on top of the world, but by evening you may be wrestling with the flesh - sorely tempted to raid the refrigerator and counting how many more days are left in your fast. This is especially true if you are new at fasting. To

counteract temptations like these, take extra time with the Lord to spend with God. Step outside for fresh air and a moderate walk of a mile or two, and talk to the Lord as you walk along. And in the process always keep on sipping water or juice frequently during your waking hours.

How to complete the fast:

All the experts agree that "breaking the fast" is the critical phase of fasting. While your body is in the resting mode, your stomach shrinks and your intestines become idle, so solid food must be re-introduced very slowly to avoid kidney failure or digestive distress. It is recommended that after a 40-day fast, you should make a careful transition for at least three days before returning to eating meats or fats or normal foods.

Further, if you end your fast gradually, the beneficial physical and spiritual effects will linger for days. But if you rush into solid foods, you may lose much of your deep sense of peace and experience physical problems such as diarrhoea, sickness, fainting, and frankly even death in some cases, due to shock!

Most experts agree that breaking a fast with vegetables, either steamed or raw, is best. Your stomach is smaller now, so eat lightly. Stop before you feel full. Stay away from starches like pastas, potatoes, rice, or bread for at least a week. Also, avoid meats, dairy products, and any fats or oils for a week or more. Introduce them very slowly and in small amounts.

Extended fasts are not the only fasts, which need to be ended with caution. Even a 3-day fast requires reasonable precautions. It is wise to start with a little soup -- something thin and nourishing such as vegetable soup and fresh fruits such as watermelon and orange.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: **SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

LESSON 1

COURSE TEACHER: **BISHOP EKONG**

Introduction: 1 Corinthians 12:1

Spiritual gifts are very important to the Body of Christ, which is the church. Without it the church cannot exist or make progress.

It is meant to be a blessing to the family of believers and for effectiveness in the spread of the gospel.

Every believer is an important member of the Body of Christ.

God gives each member gifts, which vary from person to person.

These gifts are given for the effective functioning of the Body.

Christ is the Head and the Body must relate to it if it is to have a meaningful activity (*Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:15-16, 5:23, Colossians 2:19*).

A head without a body is as useless as a body without a head.

Just as our physical bodies have many members, which differ from each other in shape and function, so also each member of the body of Christ is unique in its functions and abilities. (*1Corinthians 12:14; Romans 12:5*)

A body, which does not have all its members, is limited in what it can do. For example, a man with only one leg cannot run a race; a blind man cannot read; a man without arms cannot climb a tree; etc.

Every member in Christ's body is important to Him (*1Corinthians 12:27*)

Each member of the body does not have the same use.

Each member has its own function or special ability or duty, for example, the function of the eye is to see.

The eyes cannot do the work of the ears although they are both equally important.

Without the toe, the body cannot maintain balance and will stumble easily.

Without the thumb, the hand cannot grab and the whole body suffers because of lack of a thumb.

God placed each member in the body where He sees appropriate. The eyes are not on the legs and so also the ears are not on the belly. They are where they could function most effectively.

We can therefore not compare gifts because each gift is suited to each individual (*Romans 12:5*). Just as the members of the body are different to each other in function, it is fruitless to compare the mouth with ears. They both serve the body very well.

Talents and Spiritual gifts

Talents are abilities with which people are born.

Different people have different natural abilities.

Many unbelievers have talents, for example, in music, oratory, arts, etc.

These are not spiritual gifts.

A Spiritual gift comes only from God (*James 1:17*)

Every spiritual gift is meant for the benefit of the body of Christ and must be used:

- (a) For its intended purpose and not for selfish gain (*1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Peter 4:10*)
- (b) In love (*Galatians 5:6*)

1.1 - You must Have Knowledge of God's gifts

Faith is at the heart of all spiritual gifts and their use

Faith is produced through the knowledge of the Bible, and hence knowledge of spiritual gifts (*Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 12:1*)

The disciples at Ephesus did not know or heard of the Holy Spirit baptism and therefore did not have its experience (*Acts 19:2*)

Through Paul's teaching, they received knowledge and then faith for receiving and recognising the gifts, and also for their effective use.

Without the knowledge of spiritual gifts, it will not have a place in our lives and ministries that God meant them to have.

Knowledge also governs faith, that is, it gives it a sense of direction and sets its limits.

Knowledge must therefore be complete and true otherwise it gives faith a faulty foundation.

For example, if one is taught that the gift of tongues is not for our day, then one will not be able to receive this gift until it is corrected.

Faith cannot carry anyone beyond their knowledge.

Knowledge also determines experience.

If we follow this order, that is, (1) Knowledge, (2) Faith, (3) Experience, we have a better understanding of the value of knowledge.

Until we know about spiritual gifts, we cannot believe by faith in them. Until we believe in spiritual gifts, they will not likely be a part of our experience.

Knowing the truth about these gifts leads us to a more fruitful experience in their use.

1.2 - Groups of Gifts (Read 1Corinthians 12:4-6)

There are three different groups of spiritual gifts, that is,

- (1) Gifts of Ministry
- (2) Other Ministry gifts
- (3) Gifts of the Spirit

The Bible does not make an exact list under each grouping of spiritual gifts, and sometimes the groupings are run together.

It shows that all the spiritual gifts are closely related, and may sometimes overlap each other.

This should not cause any problem because all the gifts come from God and for a common purpose, which is

- (a) The building up of the body of believers
- (b) For the glory of God.

Gifts of Ministry - (Ephesians 4:7-8, 11)

These are believers who Christ gives to the Church to be its leaders

They are listed as:

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Pastors
5. Teachers

Pastors and Teachers are sometimes one and the same person and may be referred to as Pastor-Teacher.

These gifts are given to prepare all God's people for the work of the ministry in order to build up the body of Christ (*Ephesians 4:12*)

Other Ministry Gifts - (*Romans 12:6-13; 1Corinthians 12:28*)

These gifts are available to all believers.

They are listed as:

1. Ministering
2. Teaching
3. Exhorting
4. Giving
5. Ruling (Governments)
6. Showing mercy
7. Helps

Gifts of the Spirit - (*1Corinthians 12:7-10*)

These are nine gifts, which the Holy gives to believers as He wills

They are listed as:-

1. Word of Wisdom
2. Word of knowledge
3. Faith
4. Gifts of healings
5. Working of miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of spirits
8. Gift of tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

These gifts are supernatural in a special way. They have their source in God and their power comes from God.

These gifts are not possible by human means and no human abilities can reproduce them.

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SUBJECT: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 2: THE MINISTRY GIFTS

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

2.0 - Ministry Gifts (*Ephesians 4:7-16*)

In every gift, two parties are involved: (1) the giver and (2) the receiver.

In this case we recognise that Christ is the giver of Ministry gifts (*Ephesians 4:7-11*)

He gave them to individuals in the body for the good of the whole body.

As the giver of gifts and as the Head of the Body, His purpose is that the body grows up in every way to Him (*Ephesians 4:15*)

Everything which reaches the body comes from the Head. This includes both the gifts of ministry and the nourishment of the body.

Under Christ's control the whole body is nourished and held together by its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God wants it to grow - (*Colossians 2:19*)

Our natural head serves three general functions:

- (a) It knows the needs of the body
- (b) It sees to it that the needs of the body are met
- (c) It controls the body

The same functions apply to Christ in relation to the gifts of ministry.

1. Christ knows the needs of the Body. He alone can decide what members of His Body can minister to those needs. The members may help one another, but they cannot give spiritual gifts.

No other part of our body knows the needs of the physical body as the head and we can therefore not take it upon ourselves to select certain members to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor, or teachers.

2. Christ sees to it that the Body's needs are met.

If our bodies need more milk because our bones break too easily, the head will know and ensure that the need is met.

3. Christ controls the Body just as our heads control our body. It gives direction to each part of the body.

Every part of the body takes directions from the head to minister to the body's needs.

Likewise, Christ, after He has given gifts to His body, gives direction for their use.

2.1 - Apostles

The gift of ministry known as the apostle is one of the most important offices in the body.

The gift is listed first, perhaps because it has to do with founding and overseeing (*1Corinthians 12:28*).

Apostle means 'to send away' or 'to send forth'.

It points to the work of a missionary, which is a special kind of work. However, not all missionaries are apostles.

An apostle therefore is one who is sent forth by the Lord to carry the gospel into new places, extending the work of the Church and opening fields to the gospel.

His work is to lay the foundation for a new part of the Body. It also includes the task of building up the Body and overseeing the Body.

We have to understand that it is the Lord that chooses an individual and gives the person the calling and the special ability to be an apostle - (e.g. Paul - *Acts 22:14-15*; the twelve Apostles - *Luke 6:12-16*). No-one can take it upon themselves to do so.

There are two kinds of apostles:

(a) The twelve apostles of Christ including the replacement to Judas Iscariot (*Acts 1:21-26*)

(b) Others with this gift of ministry given for the whole period of building the Church

The 12 apostles occupy a special place in the Body of Christ, which cannot be repeated. They had a part in the founding of the church in the world. The city walls of the New Jerusalem will be built on the 12 foundation stones, on which will be written the names of these 12 apostles (*Revelations 21:14*).

Some people therefore claim that there is no need of apostles after the twelve, but apostles will always be necessary in the building process of the Church.

Some claim to be apostles when they are not (*Revelations 2:2; 2Corinthians 11:12-14*). Some are appointed by men and may not necessarily be apostles at all.

Those who are true apostles may not even know. They may never think of themselves in that way.

2.2 - Prophets

The gift of ministry known as prophet has two main functions.

- (1) Foretelling, which means “to tell about an event before it takes place”
- (2) Forth-telling, which means “to tell forth, to speak out”.

Foretelling means the same as predicting events. The Old Testament prophets often foretold or predict events before they came to pass. They also gave the meaning of the message from God to the people.

Forth-telling involves speaking out as one is breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. This is inspiration.

Old Testament Prophets are somewhat different from the New Testament prophets.

1. The Old Testament prophets’ words were not usually found in the word of God already given. Only occasionally does he quote from a written record.

The New Testament prophet, however, most often brings challenge and encouragement based on truths already received (*Acts 15:32*).

2. The Old Testament prophet’s ministry was mostly that of prediction, foretelling the future. Their ministry is often tested by the accuracy of their predictions (*Deuteronomy 18:22; Jeremiah 28:9*). There are few examples of New Testament prophets who foretold the future, for example, Agabus (*Acts 11:27-30; 21:10-11*).

A prophet has a unique gift with insight into future events.

He has a divinely focused special message to the church or to the world.

A prophet speaks by inspiration as he is being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit (*2Peter 1:19-21*).

2.3 - Evangelists

(a) The evangelist’s chief function is understood from the meaning of the word evangelist.

- Evangelist means “one who announces good tidings”.
- The good tidings or news is the gospel (*1Corinthians 15:1-4*)

(b) The other function of the evangelist is to prepare God's people for the work of Christian service (*Ephesians 4:12*)

- Every believer is to be taught to spread the gospel and it is the responsibility of the evangelist to ensure that this is so (*Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:20*)

Evangelists have a special gift of preaching or witnessing in a way that brings unbelievers into the experience of salvation.

The gift of evangelist operates for the establishment of new works while pastors and teachers follow up to organise and sustain.

Essentially, the gift of evangelist operates to establish converts and to gather them spiritually and literally into the body of Christ.

There were people chosen by the apostles and the church to become deacons or stewards but two of them later became evangelists, that is, Stephen and Philip (*Acts 6:2-10; 21:8*).

Those chosen by Christ to be evangelists are chosen for several reasons which include faithfulness, being full of the Holy Spirit, full of wisdom, full of faith, and full of power (*Acts 6:3,8*)

God sometimes may call a young person to be evangelist before that person or anyone else knows he has the necessary qualities, e.g. Samuel and Jeremiah's call to be prophets - (*1Samuel 3; Jeremiah 1:4-10*)

The believer who receives the gift is one whom God knows is qualified, or whom God will qualify, for the task.

We can learn more about the function of an evangelist through the lives of Stephen and Philip in the following passages - Philip (*Acts 8:5-6, 8, 12, 26-40*); Stephen (*Acts 6:8, 10, 15; 7:2-53, 60*)

Gifts of healing or working of miracles are often present in an evangelists' ministry because this attracts people to the hearing of the gospel (*Acts 5:12-14*)

Like every other gift, the gift of evangelism needs to be fully developed if it is to reach its full usefulness.

2.4 Pastor - Teacher

It is commonly accepted that the gifts of Pastor and Teacher apply to one ministry. We will therefore study these gifts as one ministry.

The word 'Pastor - Teacher' means pastor with a teaching ministry.

Of the gift of ministry, the Pastor - Teacher is most common. There are more Pastor-Teachers than Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists. The reason is that there is a need for more of them in the Body because they are able to meet many needs of the Body.

The word 'Pastor' comes from a root meaning to 'protect', from which we get the word 'shepherd'

It implies the function of a shepherd/leader to nurture, teach, and care for the spiritual needs of the Body.

Several whole books of the New Testament are especially for Pastors and these are called the Pastoral Epistles. The list includes the two epistles of Timothy and epistle to Titus.

The qualities of a Pastor-Teacher are faithfulness, wisdom, faith, fullness of the Holy Spirit, and power. He should also have the quality of loving and caring for people. This is why they are often referred to as shepherds (*Acts 20:28-29; 1Peter 5:2-4*)

The giver of this gift Himself is the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. Pastor-Teachers must also have the same loving and caring qualities as the Chief Shepherd.

The Role of the Pastor-Teacher

1. He delivers from ignorance. Ignorance is the greatest hindrance to faith.
 - The teacher imparts knowledge to take away the ignorance, which hinders faith in the Body.
2. He delivers from self-centredness.
 - He does this by leading members of the Body into a Christ-centred life.
3. He, as the Shepherd, loves his sheep and is willing to lay down his life for them (*John 10:11-15*)
 - A Pastor-Teacher is able to do little for his flock until he first loves them.
 - Love is the basis for the fruitful function of all spiritual gifts.
4. As a shepherd, he feeds the flock (*John 21:15-16; 1Peter 5:2*).
 - The food must be the kind that both the lambs and sheep can eat.
 - The milk of God's word must be for the lambs, that is, the new believers (*1Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:13*).
 - Solid food should be for the sheep or the mature believers (*1Corinthians 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:14*)
 - He is to teach and exhort believers with all patience (*1Timothy 6:12; 4:11; 2Timothy 2:2, 24*).
6. As a shepherd, he is to be a leader of his flock (*John 10:4*)

- He is to be an example to his flock (*1Peter 5:3; 1Timothy 4:12*)
- A good leader goes ahead of those who follow, and becomes their example.

7. The shepherd protects his flock (*John 10:11-12; Acts 20:28-29*)

- The best protection a Pastor-Teacher can give to his flock is a solid understanding of God's word

8. The Shepherd aims at reproduction (*John 10:16; 2Timothy 4:5*)

- He wants his sheep to produce more sheep.
- Much of what he does is governed by that purpose.
- When the Pastor-Teacher functions as an evangelist, two things happen:-

- (a) He brings new members into the Body of Christ.
- (b) He, by his example, also teaches his flock how to bring new members into the flock.

16). - The purpose of reproduction is the building of Christ's body (*Ephesians 4:13-16*).

- (a) They labour to bring the body of believers to unity of the faith, that is, by making them believe the same things as revealed in the Bible. This can only be achieved through oneness of the Spirit (*Psalms 133:1*)

- (b) They labour to bring believers to the knowledge of Christ. This is not knowledge about Christ but knowing Him personally and intimately (*Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 3:10*).

- (c) They labour to bring them to maturity or to perfection. Their reference point is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (*Ephesians 4:13*)

- A healthy, mature body reproduces itself.
- When believers are matured, new members will be added to the Body.
- The highest purpose of God is to have many sons bearing the image of His Son in Glory (*Romans 8:28-30*).

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LESSON 3: OTHER MINISTRY GIFTS

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

3.0 - Other Ministry Gifts

There about seven other ministry gifts listed in the Bible apart from the five mentioned earlier in Lesson 2. They are described and explained as follows:

3.1 - Gift of Ministering (Romans 12:7)

The gift of ministering generally has to do with serving the needs of others.

This can also have a broad application in the sense that it covers the use of all other spiritual gifts (Matthew 20:25-28).

Specifically, this gift will be considered as it relates to serving the material needs of others (2Corinthians 9:1; 8:3-4; Acts 9:36-41).

This gift also illustrates the work and office of a deacon.

An illustration of someone with this gift is Dorcas (Acts 9:36-41)

- She used her talents of serving to minister to the needs of the poor and needy.

One with a natural talent of singing can translate this talent into a gift of ministering if the person is filled with the Holy Spirit.

One of the most effective ways of winning people to Christ is, first, through ministering to their needs.

Jesus Christ is a good example of one with this gift, for example, the feeding of the 5000 people, the healing of the blind, etc. As a result of their being ministered to, they were able to believe the message of Christ (John 9:35-36).

3.2 - Gift of Teaching (Romans 12:7)

The difference between the Pastor-Teacher and the gift of teaching is that the Pastor-Teacher gift is related to a leadership ministry, whereas, the gift of teaching is not limited to certain church leaders.

Teaching means a) Instructing b) imparting knowledge c) being an example and d) Training.

The gift of teaching therefore is the supernatural ability to explain and apply the truths received from God for the church.

A Pastor-Teacher also has this gift of teaching.

The gift of teaching provides the ability to make divine truth clear to believers.

Knowledge is the foundation for faith. Therefore, those who impart knowledge by teaching are making faith possible.

The knowledge, which the teacher is to give must come mainly from the word of God. The teacher gives meaning to the word of God.

The gift of teaching can be in operation when a parent teaches the word of God to the children.

It can be in operation when a Sunday School teacher or a Bible School teacher is teaching a class.

It can also be in operation when any believer teaches a friend or group of friends.

3.3 - Gift of Exhortation (Romans 12:8)

The word 'exhortation' means encouragement.

In a broader sense, it means to entreat, comfort, or instruct (Acts 4:36; Hebrews 10:25).

Every believer can have this gift. Those with the five-fold ministry gifts possess this gift also.

The purpose of this gift is

(a) To call believers to a closer walk with God, or to call them to some purpose of God.

(b) To call believers to action which will help themselves and others in their walk with God.

The use of this gift can be seen in the following passages:

Believers are called

- (a) To be faithful and true to the Lord - Acts 11:23
- (b) To continue in the faith - Acts 14:22
- (c) To perform a certain task - 2Corinthians 9:5
- (d) To abound more and more in pleasing the Lord - 1Thessalonians 4:1
- (e) To warn the unruly, to comfort the feebleminded, to support the weak, to be patient toward all men, not to render evil for evil, to follow that which is good - 1Thessalonians 5:14-15
- (f) To work and eat their own bread - 2Thessalonians 3:12
- (g) To make supplication, prayer, and intercession for all men - 1Timothy 2:1
- (h) To be sober minded - Titus 2:6
- (I) To contend for the faith - Jude 3

Anyone that is able to appeal to believers in all the above, possesses the gift of exhortation.

We are to exhort one another daily - Hebrews 3:13

3.4 - Gift of Giving (Romans 12:8; 2Corinthians 8 & 9)

The gift of giving relates to our money, but also relates to such things as our time, strength and talents.

This is a gift of God, which enables a believer to freely and generously give of what he has to meet the needs of other people and of God's work.

This gift comes from uniting man's ability with God's ability. Man's ability is limited but God's ability is unlimited. This gift is developed when man's little ability and God's great ability come together.

More examples of how this gift is and should be expressed can be found in 2Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 and also 1Kings 17:8-16.

In 1Kings 17, a widow was able to give the last of what she had even in time of famine, and God blessed her for her act of faith.

The foundation for the gift of giving is laid when we give.

To receive this gift, we must learn to give and be obedient when called upon to do so.

When the gift of giving functions as God desires, our giving is not governed only by our ability to give but by God's ability.

The gift is to be exercised without outward show or pride, and with liberality (2Corinthians 1:12; 8:2-3; 9:11, 13)

To be able to exercise this gift as God desires, one must first give himself wholly to God (2Corinthians 8:5).

The purpose of the gift is

- (a) To meet the needs of the Body of Christ
- (b) To enable the Body to carry out its mission

3.5 - Gift of Ruling (Romans 12:8)

Gift of Ruling can also refer to gift of governments or leadership or administration.

It is a gift given to certain members of the Body for the purpose of being able 'to stand in front' or 'stand before' or presiding over the Body as in leadership.

It is given to direct the Body, superintending and developing the Body of Christ.

It is a gift with a special ability to organise, to manage, and to lead.

Government within the Body of Christ is necessary. If there is no-one to lead or to direct, there is no government.

Without government and the gift of ruling, the Body of Christ is feeble and unable to perform its task.

The purpose of this gift therefore is to give unity and strength to the Body, so that it can fulfil its purpose in the world.

This gift is to be exercised with diligence (Romans 12:8)

3.6 - Gift of Showing Mercy (Romans 12:8)

Mercy means compassion or to feel with or for another.

It also means to sympathise.

The gift of showing mercy therefore is the gift of showing others that you feel both with them and for them.

It is to relate to others with empathy, respect, and honesty.

This gift is needed because there will be times when people would be sad, lonely and sorrowful. They will have a great need for someone to stand beside them and have compassion for them.

Jesus Christ is a good example of someone with this gift (Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 8:2; Luke 7:13)

Jesus felt deeply with people and for people.

He not only had compassion on them but did what he could to help them by ministering to their needs in practical ways (James 2:15-16).

Barnabas is another good example of one with this gift (Acts 9:27; 11:25-26; 15:37-39).

This gift is to be exercised with kindness and cheerfulness, and not as a matter of duty (Romans 12:8).

3.7 - Gift of Helps (1Corinthians 12:28)

Help means 'relief or assistance'.

The gift of helps is that gift which a believer is enabled by the Holy Spirit to relieve or assist another by helpful deeds.

Any member can have the gift of helps but some are especially gifted to be helpers.

They exercise this gift by serving the Body.

They are sometimes referred to as deacon or deaconesses - (Romans 16:1; 1Timothy 3:13).

There are few examples of people who exercised this gift in the Bible and these can be found in Acts 18:27; Romans 16:9 and Philippians 4:3.

Assistance or relief can be provided through visitations, prayers, domestic help, etc.

The function of the gift of helps is to give believers the ability to help the leaders and the church in general with their work.

The purpose for the gift is to help get the actual work done to extend God's kingdom.

One may have a special ability to pray, but he will not do the church any good until he exercises his gift of helps by praying.

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SUBJECT: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 4: GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP EKONG

4.0 - Gifts of the Spirit (1Corinthians 12:7-11)

The final group of gifts, which is the gifts of the Spirit are given by the Holy Spirit.

None of these gifts are possible through human ability or talent; they are supernatural.

It can only be manifested after baptism in the Holy Spirit.

It is important that we not only know about these gifts but want to see them in operation.

The gifts are resident in the Holy Spirit and manifested by the Spirit through the believer.

Every gift should be used for edifying of the church (1Corinthians 14:26)

The gifts are sometimes regrouped into blocks of threes for example.

- (a) Gifts of Revelation
 - Word of wisdom
 - Word of knowledge
 - Discerning of spirits
- (b) Gifts of Power
 - Faith
 - Working of Miracles
 - Gifts of healings
- (c) Gifts of Utterance
 - Prophecy
 - Diverse kinds of tongues
 - Interpretation of tongues

4.1 - Word of Wisdom (1Corinthians 12:8)

Wisdom is good judgement based upon knowledge.

Word (Logos) of wisdom speaks of a small portion of God's unlimited wisdom given to a believer to be spoken at the proper time.

One does not get this gift because one is naturally a wise person.

It does not come through training or experience but only by the Holy Spirit.

An example of an expression of this gift can be found in Acts 15:5-27 during a church council meeting to discuss an important problem. James spoke a word of wisdom in verses 13-21 and this was unanimously agreed as in verses 22-29. His statements helped solve a difficult problem.

This gift can be expressed during preaching as in Peter's sermon (Acts 2:16-36) and in Stephen's sermon (Acts 7; 6:10)

We can also see it expressed during a time of persecution (Acts 5:26-33; Luke 12:12; 21:15)

It can be expressed when people have personal problems (Acts 5:1-11).

In general, word of wisdom is given for the following purposes:-

- (a) It is a supernatural perspective to ascertain the divine means for accomplishing God's will in given situations.
- (b) It is a divinely given power to appropriate spiritual intuition in problem solving.
- (c) It gives a sense of divine direction.
- (d) It is being led by the Holy Spirit to act appropriately in a given set of circumstances.
- (e) It is knowledge rightly applied. Wisdom acts interactively with knowledge and discernment.

4.2 - Word of Knowledge (1Corinthians 12:8)

Knowledge means knowing.

The Holy Spirit has access to God's vast treasure of knowledge, which is described as being Omniscient (unlimited knowledge - All knowing).

Word of knowledge therefore is being able to speak forth or reveal a bit of God's unlimited knowledge.

God enables the believer to say things he in no way knows by using his own abilities.

Throughout the book of Acts, we see manifestations of the word of knowledge. In each of the examples in Acts, the believer spoke something he had no way of knowing except by the Spirit.

- (a) Peter knew Annanias and Sapphira had lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-10)
- (b) Peter knew Simon had bitter envy and sin in his heart (Acts 8:23)
- (c) Ananias knew several things about Saul, for example, where Saul was, where he was praying; he knew that Saul had a vision, was a chosen vessel of the Lord, and would suffer for the Lord (Acts 9:1-18)
- (d) Peter knew that three men had come to see him on behalf of Cornelius (Acts 10:19)
- (e) Paul knew that the sailors in the storm-tossed ship could be saved unless they stayed with the ship (Acts 27:13-14)

Jesus spoke the word of knowledge in John 4:16-19.

The word of knowledge is not mind-reading.

It is not imagination of one's minds, which can deceive.

The word of knowledge often works together with the word of wisdom. For example, Jesus told the Samaritan woman of her past life through the word of knowledge, and gave solution to her problem through word of wisdom.

Another example, especially in the Old Testament is that of Joseph and the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams and also the advice given to Pharaoh (Genesis 41:1-36).

It should be noted that sometimes evil men, such as witch doctors, seem to have power to know things in a strange way. This is NOT a gift of word of knowledge but divination. This is a counterfeit of the devil. Satan knows some things evil men do not know by their own power. However, Satan does not know everything, but God knows all things.

Examples of such manifestation are in Luke 8:28 and Acts 16:16-18.

This type of manifestation may be referred to as the spirit of divination.

In general, the word of knowledge is

- (a) a supernatural revelation of the divine will and plan
- (b) a supernatural insight or understanding of circumstance or a body of facts by revelation
- (c) a deeper and more advanced understanding of the communicated acts of God.
- (d) an objective understanding concerning divine things in human duties.

4.3 - Discerning of spirits (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is a supernatural ability to tell the difference between manifestations that come from the Holy Spirit and those that do not.

It is the power of spiritual insight - supernatural revelation of plans and purposes of the devil and his forces.

It is also a supernatural ability to detect the realm of the spirits and their activities.

There are three spirits in existence; the spirit of man, the evil spirits and the Spirit of God.

Discerning of spirits is also the ability to know which of the three spirits is manifesting.

Satan is a great counterfeiter and tries to copy what the Holy Spirit does through deception.

Men can also speak out of their own spirit, which may appear as though the Holy Spirit is speaking.

The gift of discerning of spirits is given therefore to help protect the Body against deception and danger and also from false teaching.

In Jesus' ministry, He was able to discern both good and evil spirits, for example, John 1:47; Luke 9:55; 13:12.

Other examples in the early church can be found in Acts 5; 8:23; 16:17-18; 19:11-17.

The gift of discerning of spirits sometimes overlaps or work hand-in-hand with the gift of the word of knowledge.

4.4 - Gift of Faith (1Corinthians 12:9)

Generally speaking, faith is the ability to believe.

Gift of faith is beyond ordinary faith.

It is a special faith given by the Holy Spirit to meet a special need.

It is a small part of God's perfect faith given by the Holy Spirit to a believer.

Usually, three things are present when the gift of faith is manifested:-

- (a) An impossible condition or situation exists
- (b) A gift of faith is given
- (c) A solution is seen.

An example is seen in the case of Peter and the lame man in Acts 3:1-11.

It is important that believers must dare to act like Peter when the Holy Spirit drops this gift into their hearts. Often believers are afraid to act, and then faith cannot work.

When the gift of faith drops into one's spirit, there is a strong persuasion that God will do a certain thing. The believer knows within him that God will act.

In general, the gift of faith is the

- supernatural ability to believe God without doubt
- supernatural ability to combat unbelief
- supernatural ability to meet adverse circumstances with trust in God's message and works.
- inner conviction impelled by an urgent and higher calling.

4.5 - Working of Miracles (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is the supernatural ability to do things, which are otherwise impossible.

God is Omnipotent and this is a bit of God's unlimited power in operation.

At times, it is not easy to say which mighty work is a miracle and which is a gift of healing. This makes no difference because they flow out of the same Spirit.

There are Old Testament examples as in Exodus 17:1-6; Joshua 3:15-17; 10:12-13; 1Kings 18:37-38; 2Kings 6:1-7.

In the ministry of Jesus Christ:-

- (a) He turned water into wine (John 2:1-11)
- (b) He calmed the stormy sea (Matthew 8:25-26)
- (c) He and Peter walked on water (Matthew 14:22-31)
- (d) He fed many people with two loaves and five fishes (John 6:5-14)
- (e) He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)

There were also examples in the early church:-

- (a) Escape from prison (Acts 5:17-20; 12:5-17)
- (b) The dead raised to life (Acts 9:36-44)
- (c) An enemy of God blinded (Acts 13:6-11)
- (d) No hurt from a snake bite (Acts 28:1-6)

Miracles are never to be used for selfish purpose (Luke 9:54-56) but for the building up of the church.

Miracles also help to remove obstacles, which hinder the gospel (Acts 5; 13:6-11; 12:1-5).

The more the gift is used for this purpose, the more miracles will be seen.

This gift operates closely with the gift of faith and healing, to bring authority over sin, Satan, sickness and the binding forces of this age.

4.6 - Gifts of Healings (1Corinthians 12:9)

This is a supernatural ability to heal sicknesses, diseases and infirmities.

Gifts is plural which means that there are more than one gift of healing.

These gifts are likely to be manifested more often through church leaders because their whole lives are given to ministering to people. They also have more contact with people in need.

Church elders can also minister with this gift (James 5:14)

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit will not use any believer with the gift but that this operates mostly with church leaders.

Examples of infirmity could be lameness (Acts 3:2; 8:7; 14:8-10), blindness (Acts 9:17-18), paralysis (Acts 9:33).

Examples of sickness are illness (Acts 5:16), fever (Acts 28:8).

Examples of disease are dysentery (Acts 28:8), etc.

Therefore, there is no disease, sickness or infirmity that cannot be healed by the gifts of healings.

Some people may be gifted to heal sicknesses only, or infirmities or diseases.

The healing could be physical, psychological or emotional.

The gift can be exercised by a touch of the hand, a spoken word or a command. The commonest method of healing recorded in the scriptures is through the spoken word.

However, the gifts of healing are manifested through believers as the Holy Spirit leads.

The purpose of the gifts of healing is to meet the physical needs of the church, and to help bring people to Jesus.

The gift enables the members to be healthy and well physically. The whole body of believers is helped as individual members prosper physically.

4.7 - Prophecy (1Corinthians 12:10)

Prophecy is a divinely inspired and anointed utterance.

It is a supernatural proclamation in a known language.

The manifestation is by the Spirit of God and not by human intellect. It is a natural result of being filled with the Spirit (Acts 19:6; 1Peter 4:11)

Prophecy involves **forthtelling** and **foretelling**.

To **forthtell** means to speak out or speak forth God's message as one is being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit.

It may come upon the preacher in the course of preaching.

To **foretell** means to predict or tell something before it happens. God knows everything both past, present, and future and is able through prophecy to reveal a bit of what will happen in the future.

Evil men sometimes predict the future and they are called fortune-tellers (Acts 16:16). The source of this ability is from Satan. Satan's strategy is to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10) and believers must therefore stay away from such agents of the devil (Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

Any member of the Body of Christ can prophesy. However, not all those who prophesy have the office of a prophet but a prophet will always prophesy.

The purpose of the gift of prophecy is for edification, encouragement and comfort of the church (1Corinthians 14:3).

Prophecy must be exercised as follows:

- (a) Must be according to the faith we have (Romans 12:6)
- (b) Must be limited and judged (1Corinthians 14:29). Do not go on and on prophesying; give time for others to judge.
 - Every prophecy must agree with God's word; otherwise, it is false. Some prophecies may come from a man's spirit or from the evil spirit.
- (c) Everyone may prophesy (1Corinthians 14:5, 24, 31)
- (d) Those who have a prophecy to give do not have to speak forth. They must have the right time to do so and under submission to whoever is the leader (1Corinthians 14:32-33)
- (e) Those with the gift of prophecy must be willing to take instruction and to be corrected (1Corinthians 14:37)

4.8 - Divers Kinds of Tongues (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is a supernatural utterance in languages unknown to the speaker. It could be the language of angels or of men (1Corinthians 13:1).

This is the commonest of all the gifts and is an evidence and sign of the indwelling and working of the Holy Spirit.

The gift can be manifested anytime, anywhere and in any of life's circumstances.

Tongues is the language of the Spirit and enables us to talk with God better than we ever could with our human ability. Recall that God is Spirit.

Tongues is evidence of the baptism of the Holy (Acts 2:4; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:44-47; 19:1-6).

Therefore, everyone who is baptised in the Holy Spirit will speak in tongues.

Speaking in tongues builds up the believer spiritually (1Corinthians 14:4; Jude 20)

Speaking should always be directed to God and not to men (1Corinthians 14:2-3, 14-17; Acts 2:11; 10:46).

When we pray in tongues, we are able to pray as we cannot pray in the natural (Romans 8:26)

The use of speaking in tongues is as follows:-

- (a) It must not be given too much importance but allowance should be given for the operation of other gifts in public worship (1Corinthians 14:6, 26).
- (b) It should be limited to two or three utterances in public service (1Corinthians 14:27).
- (c) It must be interpreted (1Corinthians 14:27).
- (d) The one speaking in tongues must be silent if there is no-one present to interpret (1Corinthians 14:28). They are also to pray that they may be able to interpret (1Corinthians 14:13).
- (e) Speaking in tongues should not be forbidden (1Corinthians 14:39)
- (f) Speaking in tongues is not to create confusion (1Corinthians 14:40)

4.9 - Interpretation of Tongues (1Corinthians 12:10)

This is the supernatural power to reveal the meaning of tongues.

It does not serve as a translation but rather a declaration of meaning - the interpreter never understands the tongue he is interpreting.

It is a supernatural and miraculous phenomenon.

Translation means 'to say the same thing in another language'.

The purpose of this gift of interpretation is to give the meaning of what is being spoken in tongues, thereby edifying the body, and members can then understand what was spoken in the strange tongue.

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
ARUSHA - TANZANIA

SUBJECT: SPIRITUAL GIFTS QUESTIONNAIRE

LESSON 5

COURSE TEACHER: BISHOP E. S. EKONG

Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire
(Browning-Modified Wagner/Houts)

Step 1

Go through the list of 105 statements in the questionnaire. For each one, mark to what extent the statement is true of your life: Much (3), Some (2), Little (1), or Not At All (0).

STEP 2

When you are finished, score the questionnaire by means of the Score Chart.

STEP 3

After filling in your scores transfer the names of the spiritual gifts to the Gift Summary Page and complete the exercises.

Question Score

Much (3), Some (2), Little (1), None (0)

1. I have a desire to speak direct messages from God that edify or exhort or comfort others.
2. I have enjoyed relating to a certain group of people over a long period of time, sharing personally in their successes and failures.
3. People have told me that I have helped them learn some biblical truth in a meaningful way.
4. I have applied spiritual truth effectively to situations in my own life.
5. Others have told me that I have helped them distinguish key and important facts of scripture.
6. I have verbally encouraged the wavering, the troubled or the discouraged.
7. Others in the church have noted that I was able to see through phoniness before it was evident to other people.
8. I find I manage money well in order to give liberally to the Lord's work.
9. I have assisted Christian leaders to relieve them for their essential job.

10. I have a desire to work with those who have physical or mental problems, to alleviate their suffering.
11. I feel comfortable relating to ethnics and minorities, and they seem to accept me.
12. I have led others to a decision for salvation through faith in Christ.
13. My home is always open to people passing through who need a place to stay.
14. When in a group, I am often the one others often look to for vision and direction.
15. When I speak people seem to listen and agree.
16. When a group I am in is lacking organization, I tend to step in and fill the gap.
17. Others can point to specific instances where my prayers have resulted in visible miracles.
18. In the name of the Lord, I have been used in curing diseases instantaneously.
19. I have spoken in tongues.
20. Sometimes when a person speaks in tongues, I get an idea about what God is saying.
21. I enjoy being called upon to do special jobs around the church.
22. Through God, I have revealed specific things, which will happen in the future.
23. I have enjoyed assuming the responsibility for the spiritual well being of a particular group of Christians.
24. I feel I can explain the New Testament teaching about the health and ministry of the body of Christ in a relevant way.
25. I can intuitively arrive at solutions to fairly complicated problems.
26. I have had insights of spiritual truth which others have said helped bring them closer to God.
27. I can effectively motivate people to get involved in ministry when it's needed.
28. I can "see" the Spirit of God resting on certain people from time to time.
29. My giving records show that I give considerably more than 10 percent of my income to the Lord's work.
30. Other people have told me that I helped them become more effective in their ministries.

31. I have cared for others when they have had material or physical needs.
32. I feel I could learn another language well in order to minister to those in a different culture.
33. I have shared joyfully how Christ has brought me to Himself in a way that is meaningful to non-believers.
34. I enjoy taking charge of church suppers or social gatherings.
35. I have believed God for the impossible and have seen it happen in a tangible way.
36. Other Christians have followed my leadership because they believed in me.
37. I enjoy the details of organizing ideas, people, resources and time for more effective ministry.
38. God has used me personally to perform supernatural signs and wonders.
39. I enjoy praying for sick people because I know that many of them will be healed as a result.
40. I have spoken an immediate message of God to His people in a language that I have never learned.
41. I have interpreted tongues with the result that the body of Christ was edified, exhorted, or comforted.
42. I don't have many special skills, but I do what needs to be done around the church.
43. People have told me that I have communicated timely and urgent messages which have come directly from the Lord.
44. I feel unafraid of giving spiritual guidance and direction in a group of Christians.
45. I can devote considerable time to learning new biblical truths in order to communicate them to others.
46. When a person has a problem, I can frequently guide them to the best Biblical solution.
47. Through study or experience, I have discerned major strategies or techniques God seems to use in furthering His kingdom.
48. People come to me in their afflictions or suffering, and have told me that they have been helped, relieved and healed.
49. I can tell with a fairly high degree of assurance when a person is afflicted by an evil spirit.

50. When I am moved by an appeal to give to God's work, I usually find the money that I need to do it.
51. I have enjoyed doing routine tasks that led to more effective ministry by others.
52. I enjoy visiting in hospitals and/or retirement homes, and feel I do well in such a ministry.
53. People in a different race or culture have been attracted to me, and we have related well.
54. Non-Christians have noted that they feel comfortable when they are around me, and that I have a positive effect on them toward developing a faith in Christ.
55. When people come to our home, they indicate that they "feel at home" with us.
56. Other people have told me that I had faith to accomplish what seemed impossible to them.
57. When I set goals, others seem to accept them readily.
58. I have been able to make effective and efficient plans for accomplishing the goals of a group.
59. God regularly seems to do impossible things through my life.
60. Others have told me that God healed them of an emotional problem when I ministered to them.
61. I can speak to God in a language I have never learned.
62. I have prayed that I may interpret if someone begins speaking in tongues.
63. Others have mentioned that I seem to enjoy routine tasks and do well at them.
64. I sometimes have a strong sense of what God wants to say to people in response to a particular situation.
65. I have helped fellow believers by guiding them to relevant portions of the Bible and praying with them.
66. I feel I can communicate Biblical truths to others and see resulting changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or conduct.
67. Some people indicate that I have perceived and applied Biblical truth to the specified needs of fellow believers.

68. I study and read quite a bit in order to learn new Biblical truths.
69. I have a desire to effectively counsel the perplexed, the guilty or the addicted.
70. I can recognize whether a person's teaching is from God, from Satan, or of human origin.
71. I am so confident that God will meet my needs that I give to Him sacrificially and consistently.
72. When I do things behind the scenes and others are helped, I am joyful.
73. People call on me to help those who are less fortunate.
74. I would be willing to leave comfortable surroundings if it would enable me to share Christ with more people.
75. I get frustrated when others don't seem to share their faith with unbelievers as much as I do.
76. Others have mentioned to me that I am a very hospitable person.
77. There have been times when I have felt sure I knew God's specific will for the future growth of His work, even when others did not been so sure.
78. When I join a group, others seem to back off and expect me to take the leadership.
79. I am able to give directions to others without using persuasion to get them to accomplish a task.
80. People have told me that I was God's instrument, which brought supernatural changes in lives or circumstances.
81. I have prayed for others and physical healing has actually occurred.
82. When I give a public message in tongues, I expect it to be interpreted.
83. I have interpreted tongues in a way that seemed to bless others.
84. I prefer being active and doing something rather than just sitting around talking or reading or listening to a speaker.
85. I sometimes feel that I know exactly what God wants me to do in ministry at a specific point in time.
86. People have told me that I have helped them to be restored to the Christian community.

87. Studying the Bible and sharing my insights with others is very satisfying for me.
88. I have felt an unusual presence of God and personal confidence when important decisions needed to be made.
89. I have the ability to discover new truths for myself through reading or observing situations firsthand.
90. I have urged others to seek a Biblical solution to their affliction or suffering.
91. I can tell whether a person speaking in tongues is genuine.
92. I have been willing to maintain a lower standard of living in order to benefit God's work.
93. When I serve the Lord, I really don't care who gets the credit.
94. I would enjoy spending time with a lonely, shut-in person or someone in prison.
95. More than most, I have had a strong desire to see people of others countries won to the Lord.
96. I am attracted to non-believers because of my desire to win them to Christ.
97. I have desired to make my home available to those in the Lord's service whenever needed.
98. Others have told me that I am a person of unusual vision and I agree.
99. When I am in charge, things seem to run smoothly.
100. I have enjoyed bearing the responsibility for the success of a particular task within my church.
101. In the name of the Lord, I have been able to recover sight to the blind.
102. When I pray for the sick, either I or they feel sensations of tingling or warmth.
103. When I speak in tongues, I believe it is edifying to the Lord's body.
104. I have interpreted tongues in such a way that the message appeared to be directly from God.
105. I respond cheerfully when asked to do a job, even if it seems menial.

Score Chart

Total

A. 1=	22=	43=	64=	85=	___ Prophecy
B. 2=	23=	44=	65=	86=	___ Pastoring
C. 3=	24=	45=	66=	87=	___ Teaching
D. 4=	25=	46=	67=	88=	___ Wisdom
E. 5=	26=	47=	68=	89=	___ Knowledge
F. 6=	27=	48=	69=	90=	___ Exhortation
G. 7=	28=	49=	70=	91=	___ Discernment
H. 8=	29=	50=	71=	92=	___ Giving
I. 9=	30=	51=	72=	93=	___ Helps
J. 10=	31=	52=	73=	94=	___ Mercy
K. 11=	32=	53=	74=	95=	___ Missions
L. 12=	33=	54=	75=	96=	___ Evangelism
M. 13=	34=	55=	76=	97=	___ Hospitality
N. 14=	35=	56=	77=	98=	___ Faith
O. 15=	36=	57=	78=	99=	___ Leadership
P. 16=	37=	58=	79=	100=	___ Administration
Q. 17=	38=	59=	80=	101=	___ Miracles
R. 18=	39=	60=	81=	102=	___ Healing
S. 19=	40=	61=	82=	103=	___ Tongues
T. 20=	41=	62=	83=	104=	___ Interpretation
U. 21=	42=	63=	84=	105=	___ Serving

Gift Summary

1. Using the results from the Score Chart on the preceding page, enter below in the "Dominant" section your three highest-rated gifts. Then enter in the "Subordinate" section the next three highest-scoring gifts. This will give you a tentative evaluation of where your gifts may lie. As with all things, these should be confirmed by the Lord and by others that know you.

Dominant: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Subordinate: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2. What ministries are you now performing (formally or informally) in the Body?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Are there any of these ministries that you are not especially gifted for? God may be calling you to consider changes.

4. In the light of your gift cluster what are some of the ministry models or roles suitable for you? What specific roles in the body of Christ has God possibly gifted you for?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Gift Descriptions

A. Prophecy. The gift of prophecy is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people. (*1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; Ephesians 4:11 – 14; Romans 12:6; Luke 7:26; Acts 15:32; Acts 21:9 – 11*)

B. Pastoring. The gift of pastoring is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to assume a long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers. (*Ephesians 4:11 – 14, 1 Timothy 3:1 – 7, John 10:1 – 18, 1 Peter 5:1 – 3*)

C. Teaching. The gift of teaching is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to communicate information relevant to the health and ministry of the body and its members in such a way that others will learn. (*1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11 – 14, Romans 12:7, Acts 18:24 – 28, Acts 12: 20 – 21*)

D. Wisdom. The gift of wisdom is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how given knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the body of Christ. (*1 Corinthians 2:1 – 13, 1 Corinthians 12:8, Acts 6:3, 10, James 1:5 – 6, 2 Peter 3:15,16*)

E. Knowledge. The gift of knowledge is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to discover, accumulate, analyze, and clarify information and ideas, which are pertinent to the well being of the body. (*1 Corinthians 2:14, 1 Corinthians 12:8, Acts 5:1 – 11, Colossians 2:2 – 3; 2 Corinthians 11:6*)

F. Exhortation. The gift of exhortation is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to minister words of comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counsel to other members of the body in such a way that they feel helped and healed. (*Romans 12:8, 1 Timothy 4:13, Hebrews 10:25, Acts 14:22*)

G. Discernment. The gift of discerning of spirits is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or satanic. (*1 Corinthians 12:10, Acts 5:1 – 11, Acts 16:16 – 18, 1 John 4:1 – 6, Matthew 16:21 – 23*)

H. Giving. The gift of giving is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to contribute their material resources to the work of the Lord with liberality and cheerfulness. (*Romans 12:8, 2 Corinthians 8:1 – 7, 2 Corinthians 9:2 – 8, Mark 12:41 – 44*)

I. Helps. The gift of helps is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to invest the talents they have in the life and ministry of other members of the body, with thus enabling those others to increase the effectiveness of their own spiritual gifts. (*1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 16:1 – 2, Acts 9:36, Luke 8:2 – 3, Mark 15: 40 – 41*)

J. Mercy. The gift of mercy is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals (both Christian & non – Christian) who suffer distressing physical, mental, or emotional problems, and to translate that compassion into cheerfully done deeds which reflect Christ's love and alleviate the suffering. (*Romans 12:8, Mark 9:41, Acts 16:33 – 34, Luke 10:33 – 35, Matthew 20:29 – 34, Matthew 25:34 – 40, Acts 11:28 – 30*)

K. Missions. The gift of missions is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to minister whatever other spiritual gifts they have in a second culture. (*1 Corinthians 9:19 – 23, Acts 8:4, Acts 13:2 – 3, Acts 22:21, Romans 10:15*)

L. Evangelist. The gift of evangelist is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to share the gospel with unbelievers in such a way that men and women become Jesus' disciples and responsible members of the body of Christ. (*Ephesians 4:11 – 14, 2 Timothy 4:5, Acts 8:5 – 6, Acts 8:26 – 40, Acts 14:21, Acts 21:8*)

M. Hospitality. The gift of hospitality is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to provide an open house and a warm welcome to those in need of food and lodging. (*1 Peter 4:9, Romans 12:9 – 13, Romans 16:23, Acts 16:14 – 15, Hebrews 13:1 – 2*)

N. Faith. The gift of faith is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for His work. (1 Corinthians 12:9, Acts 11:22 – 24, Acts 27:21 – 25, Hebrews 11, Romans 4:18 – 21)

O. Leadership. The gift of leadership is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God. (1 Timothy 5:17, Acts 7:10, Acts 15:7 – 11, Romans 12:8, Hebrews 13:17, Luke 9:51)

P. Administration. The gift of administration is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to understand clearly the immediate and long range goals of a particular unit of the body of Christ and to devise and execute effective plans for the accomplishment of those goals. (1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 6:1 – 7, Acts 27:11, Luke 14:28 – 30, Titus 1:5)

Q. Miracles. The gift of miracles is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to serve as human intermediaries through whom it pleases God to perform such powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature. (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, Acts 9:36 – 42, Acts 19:11 – 20, Acts 20:7 – 12, Romans 15:18 – 19, 2 Corinthians 12:12)

R. Healing. The gift of healing is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to serve as human intermediaries through whom it pleases God to cure illness and restore health apart from the use of natural means. (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, Acts 3:1 – 10, Acts 5:12 – 16, Acts 9:32 – 35, Acts 28:7 -10)

S. Tongues. The gift of tongues is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ (a) to speak to God in a language they have never learned and/or (b) to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people through a divinely – anointed language they have never learned. (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 1 Corinthians 14:13 – 19, Acts 2:1 – 13, Acts 10:44 – 46, Acts 19:1 – 7, Mark 16:17)

T. Interpretation. The gift of interpretation is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to make known in a vernacular the message of one who speaks in tongues. (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30, 1 Corinthians 14:13, 1 Corinthians 14:26 – 28)

U. Service. The gift of service is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to identify the unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work, and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and to help accomplish the desired results. (2 Timothy 1:16 – 18, Romans 12:7, Acts 6:1 – 7, Titus 3:14, Galatians 6:2, 10)

GRACE BIBLE TRAINING CENTRE (GBTC)
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
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BATCH 1

JUNE 2022 – OCTOBER 2022

LECTURE TIME – TABLE

TIME	JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 2022		SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2022	
	MONDAYS	TUESDAYS	MONDAYS	TUESDAYS
3.00 – 3.30pm	REGISTRATION PRAISE & WORSHIP PRAYERS & TESTIMONIES		REGISTRATION PRAISE & WORSHIP PRAYERS & TESTIMONIES	
3.30 – 4.30pm	BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE	PRAYER & INTERCESSION	BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE	SPIRITUAL GIFTS
4.30 – 4.45pm	SHORT BREAK		SHORT BREAK	
4.45 – 4.50pm	PRAISE TIME & FREEWILL OFFERING		PRAISE TIME & FREEWILL OFFERING	
4.50 – 5.50pm	CHRISTIAN CHARACTER / BIBLE SURVEY	LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES	BIBLE STUDY METHODS	EVANGELISM & DISCIPLESHIP
5.50 – 6.00pm	CLOSING PRAYER		CLOSING PRAYER	

PRINCIPAL & LECTURER:

Bishop E. S. Ekong

CO-ORDINATOR: Rev Kavishe Eligibre

Motto: *To promote and to preserve the integrity of God's Word*
(2Timothy 1:13; 2:1-2, 15; 3:14-17)