

STUDENT COPY

San Francisco Temple C. A.

New Converts

WILL LEARN

BASIC PRINCIPLES
ON HOW TO
GROW AS A CHRISTIAN

WHAT IT MEANS TO
HAVE A PERSONAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH
JESUS CHRIST

HOW TO GET TO KNOW GOD
PERSONALLY AND INTIMATELY



NEW BELIEVERS CLASS
Foundations For Faith
MANUAL

Class Date: Mondays except holidays

Class Time: 7 PM – 8 PM

Visionary – Dr. Brenda Hunt
Assistant Teacher – Allif Dove

Class Phone Number:

1-667.770.1536

Access Code **409683#**

Message
from the
Bishop



Bishop Luther J. Blackwell, Jr.

I am so excited that you are seeking to learn more about Jesus and what it means to be a Christian. I have found that there is no greater joy than living the Christian life and having a personal relationship with Jesus. The staff and congregation here at San Francisco Temple have come from every conceivable background; some churched and some unchurched, some upstanding and some immoral and rebellious. But we have found that Jesus is the absolute answer to all our problems and desires.

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STUDY MANUAL FOR NEW CONVERTS
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SECTION A: HOW DO I STUDY AND WHY ARE THE CLASSES IMPORTANT?

Because we are new converts, the one thing we must remember found in **Psalm 119:11** it says, *“Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”* With the medical advances of today it is possible to examine inside a man’s heart. And with God’s word it is possible for you, not another man but you, to spiritually look on the inside of yours. You must know as in **I Samuel 16:7** it says, *“... for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”*

Again, in **II Timothy 3:16** it tells us, *“All Scripture is given out by God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”*. God wants us to come into the knowledge of Him and thereby to grow. He wants us to be prepared for every good work.

I heard of a man recently released from prison for a murder he did not commit, he spent 22 years in prison. Satan would have that same thing happen to you. He would have you spend the rest of your life bound for sins that Christ Jesus died on the cross and paid for. But because you have the ability to come and join in these classes, you can grow in the word. It won’t be instant, but if you do what God says in **Hebrew 10:25** - *“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together....”*

Do not get weary in your well doing. Once you start these classes, try to finish. You will find yourself more comfortable in service when you have a head start on your understanding of what is expected of you from God. There will be other classes to explain what is expected of you from your choices you have made. The classes have not been geared toward whether you have had previous training or not. If you are still having a problem, let your instructor know right away we do care.

What **Proverbs 3:1-2** says about studying God’s word is, *“My son, forget not my law; But let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, And peace, shall they add to thee.”* **Proverbs 1:7**, especially for those starting out on this new journey in serving God says, *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* This is a reverent fear. It is good to have a good commentary when studying. Ask your instructor to recommend one, for ease of understanding, for Scripture says in **Proverbs 4:7** - *“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: And with all thy getting get understanding.”* The King James Version of the Bible is a good start and maybe another such as, The Amplified Version, or The Living Bible, for ease of reading. It is best not to have too many different versions of the bible for new converts; it could tend to confuse rather than explain.

SECTION B: WHAT IS THE PLAN OF SALVATION?

➤ EXPLANATION OF ALL SIX ELEMENTS OF SALVATION

There are six elements included in the plan of Salvation. We will gently go over all six, without getting too deep. They are listed in this order: **1) Hear; 2) Believe; 3) Repentance; 4) Confession; 5) Baptism; and 6) A Holy Life.**

1. Hear:

There has always been a plan of Salvation, God created this plan to save, redeem, and exalt humankind, through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Scripture shows one of the first things God did with man was to set up a speaking relationship with him. **Genesis 3:8** says, “*And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...*”. Also, we read where God would have us to use our hearing to learn of him and understand. Found in **Proverbs 2:2** it says, “*So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;*”. God knew, if we did not hear, we would not understand, and if we did understand, we could not obey.

2. Believe:

Hebrews 11:6 says, “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,*” To believe is to place one’s trust in God’s truth; one who takes God at His word and trust in Him for salvation.

3. Repentance:

Repentance at its simplest is a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Found in **Luke 5:32**, Jesus says, “*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,*”. Repentance is a change of mind. True repentance is a “godly sorry” for sinning, it’s an act of turning around and going in the opposite direction.

4. Confession:

An admission of sin. Look at **I John 1:9** it says, “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*”. The Bible also uses the word “*confession*” to describe an open, bold, and courageous proclamation of one’s faith. The one scripture that is mostly used when speaking of confession is found in **Romans 10:9-10** which says, “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*”.

5. Baptism:

Baptism is one of the most covered subjects in Scripture. During baptism, water is applied to the body. In most instances, water is used as the substance of a symbolic element, in which we are given the Grace of God and buried in Christ.

The symbolic view stresses the symbolic nature of baptism, that emphasizes baptism does not cause an inward change or alter a person’s relationship to God in any way. Although baptism is an act of obedience, commitment, and proclamation which symbolizes the believer’s identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, as stated in **Romans 6:3-4**, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*”

6. A Holy Life:

As much as God want us to live a Holy Life, He never forces His will upon us. But He is such a Holy and Covenant God, once we have come into the fullness of Him by receiving the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, He knows we no longer can deny the power that lies therein. There are many Scriptures that back this up, such as **Mark 3:29**, for it says, *“But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.”*

The New Testament Scriptures expanded on the Old Testament idea of life. The word “life” began to refer to more than physical existence. It took on a strong spiritual meaning, often referring to the spiritual life that results from our relationship with God, as it says in **I Peters 1:16**, *“Because it is written, Be ye Holy; for I am Holy,”*

SECTION C: WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF MY CHURCH?

➤ *The Basic Six Principles of the Doctrine of Christ:*

1./2. What we believe concerning the doctrine of the resurrection and eternal judgment.

These two principles are related. All of us will be resurrected and judged according to your works. The outcome according to your judgment will carry a sentence of eternity. We must all appear before the final judgment seat, as described in Revelations. In **II Corinthians 5:10** it says, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”* So, if you follow Christ you don’t have to be afraid, but if you do not, you have every reason to worry. There will be two separate resurrections and judgments. One for the saints and one for the sinners. The sinner’s judgment will take place at the “Great White Throne Judgment”. Proof of all being resurrected is found in **I Corinthians 15:51-52** - *“Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”*

3. Doctrine of laying on of hands:.

The act of laying on of hands was done in scriptures to express the idea of the transferal of authority and quality. In the New Testament, Jesus laid His hands on children, when they were sick, in **Matthew 19:13,15** it says, *“Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put His hands on them, and pray:...”*. *“And He laid His hands on them, and departed thence.”* Also, in **Matthew 9:18** it says, *“While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live”*. It was also associated with installation to office, as was done in **Deuteronomy 34:9** - *“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearken unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses”*. Also, in **I Timothy 4:14** which says, *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery.”* We believe this ritual should be accompanied by prayer. This was not done by magical powers or

superstitious rite that gave a person a special power, it expressed the idea of God's people being set apart for special task.

4. The Doctrines of Baptisms:

It is frequently thought of as an act by which believers enter the fellowship of a local congregation or the universal church. One of the most controversial views in the Church, on the nature and application of the water. On the nature of the water, there are three major views: one being *sacramental*, in this they mostly apply the water by sprinkling the candidate. The second being the *covenantal* view. This view is more contractual than will be found in the New Testament. Upon the maturity, the recipient makes a vow as God also vows. The water baptism is then considered the seal of the covenant, spoken over your life. The first two are found mostly in the Old Testament, but are yet practiced today.

This position explains that the church practices baptisms and the believer submit to it because Jesus commanded that this be done and He gave us an example by being baptized Himself. Baptism is an act of obedience, commitment, and proclamation symbolizing the believer's identification with Christ, with His death, burial, and resurrection. A key text is **Romans 6:3-4** - "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" *Live a Holy Life.*

5. Doctrine of Faith toward God:

Faith towards God is probably the most basic doctrine needed in Christianity. This is your faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross that saves you. Faith in God means believing Him, trusting Him, and obeying Him. **II Corinthians 5:7** says, "*(for we walk by faith, not by sight:)*", for without faith, you cannot overcome this world. **James 2:19** says, "*Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble*". **Habakkuk 2:4** teaches, "*...but the just shall live by his faith.*"

6. Doctrine of Repentance from Dead Works:

Remember when John the Baptist came on the scene preaching and admonishing the people to Repent! These works are acts or deeds. Gods works will often be found in the book of Psalm. Let's look at some of them: **Psalm 33:4** - "*For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.*" Then in **Psalm 92:5** - "*O Lord, how great are thy works! And thy thoughts are very deep.*" **Psalm 104:24** - "*O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches.*" Also, we can find these works discussed in the Gospel of St. John. He explains why we miss them; in **John 10:25-26**, "*Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.*" Works that Christians usually end up repenting for are works of the flesh, in **Galatians 5:19-21** it says, "*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told*

you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Works of idolatry in **Acts 7:41** says, “*And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.*” Works done in hypocrisy, **Matthew 23:3** says, “*all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*” Works of the law, although works of the law are good, yet these works do not bring salvation. Let us look at **Romans 4:2,6**, “*For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.*” Again, in verse 6, “*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,*” are found in **Galatians 2:16** - “*knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified*”.

SECTION D: DEFINITION OF CONVERSION

It is the initial change of my attitude and whether this brings me into the right relationship with God. One way it is explained, is when it describes the conversion of the Gentiles. **Acts 15:3-4** The best story of conversion in the Bible is the story of Saul on the Road to Damascus. One of the main things we need is found in the element “**Repentance**”.

In Acts 9, we must do what Saul did, he had to “De-Mask”. What do I mean? Take the cover off. Be real with God. Hide the word in your heart that you might not sin against God. **Psalms 119:11** God changed Saul the way in which He wants us all to repent and turn from our wicked ways. Our flesh is forever wicked, in our flesh there is no good thing found.

It was such a dramatic change in Saul, God even changed his name. After the de-masking of Saul, he would be ever known as Paul. Like Saul’s change **Matthew 15:18-20**, God lets us know those things He expects of us. “*But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.*”

The Bible is filled with examples of people who experienced conversion (or change). Like Paul in **Acts 9:3** it says, “*And as he journeyed, he came near Demascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*” You cannot come to God unless he calls you. This call was made possible by the sacrifice Jesus made on the Cross. **Romans 8:29-30** says, “*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*”

In **Acts 26:18** Paul says concerning conversion, “*To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*”

Conversion involves turning away from evil deeds and false worship and turning toward serving and worshipping the Lord. Conversion marks a person’s entrance into a new relationship with God, His forgiveness of sins, and a new life as part of a new fellowship with God. The two most closely related with your change are faith and repentance. Fellowship is you coming together

of two or more. Relationship is choosing to be on the right team. When you form this relationship you are committed to the ways of the leader, especially when making right decisions. Your faith experience may differ from mine, but the result may be the same. Some will call the experience, the “*second birth*”.

Let’s speak more of Paul’s conversion; You may not ride a donkey down a road and get called from there, but believe me you will receive this call during your journey through life. God will call you in due time. In Ecclesiastes 3, there is a season for each of us. We were all predestined to be called into the kingdom. Some are ready to be called before others. So now you will have to break from past relationships into the work of the Lord. How will you choose? Some will be called only once or twice, others several times. Remember, “*the day you hear his voice harden not your heart.*” You do not know when you have been given your last chance. There was one Son of Perdition, Judas. He was born with the purpose of betraying Jesus. But even Judas was given a chance to repent. But he chose not to and you also have that choice. For Jesus says in **John 3:16** - “.... *that whosoever believeth...*”

Paul had intelligence, he had degrees, but he also had a soul. With God it is all about your soul. This being found in the New Testament; his conversion would lead him to stop persecuting the saints. It would change who he was, what he was about, and how to follow so he could lead.

There were men that were following Paul on the road to Damascus, but each call is a personal call. God is not going to wait for you to change to call you, he will call you so you can change. That is why you have need to be taught concerning your growth in the kingdom. Saul as he traveled along this road had nothing on his mind but to kill, steal, and destroy. Suddenly there was a light that shone about him. When he fell to the ground, he hears a voice call to him, “*Saul, Saul.*” Saul’s conversion was so complete God even changed his name to Paul.

Paul’s answer was almost immediate. Paul was told to get up and go into the city and there he would be told what to do. That’s what God wants us to do after the call. Get up and prepare to hear what God expects out of us. No matter what we think we know, this is what happens sometimes when we are raised in the church, like being raised by pastors and first ladies. When we think we know it already, there is still plenty to learn. During your conversion there are some things you must do, and there are some things only God can do. Paul was willing to de-mask, which he did, but he was not ready to be used. The Scripture says he was blind for three more days. Since he had been willing to answer the call, now it was time to deal with his spiritual blindness. Like Lazarus, when Jesus called him from the dead, He got up, but he was still bound when he came forth out of the grave. He remained bound until God saw he was ready to exchange his grave clothes into the whole armor of God.

SECTION E: EXPLANATION OF CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

In the New Testament, circumcision was faithfully practiced by devout Jews as recognition of God’s continuing covenant with Israel. We need to first understand a covenant and how God feels concerning a covenant. A covenant is an agreement between two people or two or more groups that involves promises on the part of each to the other. The Hebrew word for “covenant” probably means “betweenness,” emphasizing the relational element that lies at the basis of all covenants. The concept of a covenant between God and His people is one of the most important

theological truths of the Bible. The covenant that you made when you answered His call on your life was an agreement that covers a person's total being. He made you a promise through the plan of salvation and you made Him a promise of total obedience. This action served as an explanation of the removing of the fore skin as a sign of God's covenant relationship with His people.

John the Baptist **Luke 1:59** says, "*and it came to pass, on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father,*" and Jesus **Luke 2:21**, says "*And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, ...*" and in **Ephesians 2:11**, says, "*Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;*". Jewish believers tended to view in their un-circumcised Gentile brothers as unenlightened and disobedient to the law of Moses. (But even a controversy over circumcision divided the early church).

Moses and the prophets used this term "circumcision" as a symbol for purity of the heart and readiness to hear and obey. Through Moses the Lord challenged Israel to submit to circumcision to the heart. This was a reference to the need for repentance. If their uncircumcised hearts were humbled, and they accept their guilt, God declared in **Leviticus 26:42** - "*Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*" In the ninth chapter of Jeremiah, the 26th verse, Jeremiah names all the nations he saw as having uncircumcised hearts.

In the New Testament, Paul enforced the act of circumcision of the heart. The Apostle Paul wrote to the believers at Rome, that Abraham the Father of Circumcision, in **Romans 4:12**, was yet uncircumcised. But he says Abraham was saved by faith. Not an outside show of circumcision of the flesh. So now Paul declares circumcision to be of no value, **Romans 4:9-12**, unless accompanied by an obedient spirit. **Romans 2:25-26**

So, circumcision to me is more understandably in the **King James Version**, found in **Romans 2:29** - "*but he is a Jew, which one is inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but God.*" God has covered all aspects for your training, and you have chosen a church, that has chosen only what God would have you to know. We offer these classes as part of every way we can assist you. Scripture says the word is a light unto our pathway, and a lamp unto our feet.

SECTION F: EXPLANATION OF THE COMMUNION

This is an ordinance that is instituted by Christ to be observed by His church until His return. This practice is usually done during a worship service, in which Christians partake of blessed bread and wine (or grape juice),. This with the purpose of remembering Christ, receiving strength from Him, and rededicating themselves to His cause. (This is generally spoken of in the word for our services as found in **I Corinthians 11:20-30**.)

There are three characteristics of Christians that are shown in the ministering and partaking of Communion. The first are Remembering and Eucharist. As found in **Luke 22:19** - "*And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, **This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.***"

Second, The First Supper is a time of refreshing and communion. As we benefit in the death and resurrection life. Found in **Romans 5:10** - *“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”*

Thirdly, The Supper is a time of recommitment and anticipation. Found in **I Corinthians 11:28** - *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”*

SECTION G: EXPLANATION OF THE GODHEAD AND THE ROLE OF EACH ELEMENT

This does not have to be complicated or deep. First let me tell you what the “Godhead” is. This is the co-existence of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the unity of what is called the Godhead, (divine nature or essence). The doctrine of the trinity means that within the being and the activity of the one God, there are three distinct persons, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although the word “trinity” is not mentioned in the Bible, the formula is mentioned in **Matthew 28:19**, Jesus says, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”* The triune cooperates as one in bringing the lost person home again into a redeemed family of believers.

SECTION H: WHAT IS PRAYER AND THE IMPORTANCE OF?

Simply put, prayer is communication with God. Because God is personal, all people can offer prayers. There have been conditions laid down in Scripture for effective prayer. Prayer cannot be replaced by devout good works in a needy world. Prayer involves various aspects for effective prayer, one of which is Faith. God speaks to us through the word and in turn we speak to Him in trustful, believing prayer. The most meaningful prayer comes from a heart that places its trust in the God who has acted and spoken through the Jesus of the Scriptures. Other important aspects of prayer are worship, thanksgiving, dedicated actions, confession and request among others. Prayer has power over everything. In **James 5:16**, Scripture says, *“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*

Prayer meets inner needs. One who prays receives freedom from fear **Psalms 118:5-6**, *“I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.”* (the Living Bible says, *“and He rescued me.”*)

Prayer brings fullness of joy, **John 16:24** - *“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”* Last but not all, prayer will bring peace into your life. In **Philippians 4:6-7** - *“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

SECTION I: EXPLANATION OF FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY (LOVE)

➤ EXPLAIN HOW EACH ELEMENT IS APPLICABLE TO ME?

Faith is the connecting power into the spiritual realm, which links us with God and makes Him become a tangible reality. As in **Romans 10:17** - *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

Faith is a strong belief in someone or something. In **Hebrew 11:1** says of faith, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* The reason this Scripture is so often preach but questioned is the first word found in this Scripture, and that is “now.” When you read it, do you hear now as meaning type or time? Faith is part of the instrument by which salvation is received.

Hope is a confident expectancy. In Scripture the word hope actually stands for the act of hoping and the thing hoped for. Genuine hope is not wishful thinking. Some would possibly say God would not want us to live on just hoping for, but God gives us the desires of a righteous heart. **Psalm 37:4** says, *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”* **Romans 15:13** says, *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”* When we learn to believe and hope we also learn how to wait on God, For in **Romans 8:24- 25**, we hear, *“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”*

Charity is the high esteem God has for his human children. **I John 4:10** says, *“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation (exchange), for our sins.”* The type of love God has for us surpasses our understanding. The Bible admonishes us to love with agape love. And in the Bible, it calls out three different types of agape love. One type of agape love is the type of love God has for His Son. Jesus explains this in **John 17:26** - *“And I have said unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”* Another type is agape love where God wants us to love one another. As in **John 13:34** - *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”* And thirdly an agape love that explains the very nature of God. As in **I John 4:8** says in explanation, *“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”*

SECTION J: EXPLANATION OF TARRYING FOR THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST, WITH THE EVIDENCE AND IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is an experience subsequent to conversion and sanctification. By subsequent we believe that this gift of the Holy Ghost is given only when we have totally surrendered to a Holy Life. **The Holy Ghost** is a gift bestowed on the believer for the purpose of equipping and empowering. The act of tarrying is what was done in the upper room where they were told to wait, and where the saints were given instructions on when the Day of Pentecost was fully come.

They were told in **Acts 2:1-4** - *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*

Tongues according to Scripture are a sign to the unbelievers. We believe that gifts of tongues are one of the nine gifts of the Spirit. But it is unnecessary for everyone to have this gift. But if you never speak again, we believe you will speak as a sign of receiving the Holy Ghost.

SECTION K: EXPLANATION OF THE CRUCIFIXION, THE RESURRECTION AND THE ASCENSION

Crucifixion is the method by which the Romans chose to torture and execute Jesus. This was the most severe form of execution and was usually reserved for slaves and criminals. The Jews and the Greeks were having trouble with accepting the crucifixion of Christ but Apostle Paul summed it up best in **I Corinthians 1:23-24** - *“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”*

Resurrection was prophesied by Jesus Himself. He told His disciples while in Galilee, at which time they were not ready to receive it. Found in **Matthew 17:22-23** - *“And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, **The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.** And they were exceeding sorry.”* This resurrection was linked with the overcoming of the powers of evil and death.

Ascension was a dramatic departure of the risen Christ from His earthly, bodily ministry among his followers. Forty days after the resurrection His earthly ministry ceased with His ascension into heaven, as found in **Mark 16:19** - *“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”* To a large extent the ascension was for the benefit of Jesus’ followers. They could no longer expect his physical presence.

SECTION L: HOW DOES MY GIVING AFFECT MY CHRISTIAN WALK?

The practice of giving a tenth of one’s income or property, as an offering to God. The custom of paying a tithe was an ancient practice found among many nations of the ancient world. The first recorded instance of tithing is found in **Genesis.14:18-20** - *“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”*

Malachi 3:6; 8-10 reads, *“For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”* *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me. Even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows*

*of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. Now, for the fear we may think that the tithe paying was for Israel only, let us consider the words written in **Galatians 3:29** - “ And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* The Spirit of Christ will constrain us to do whatsoever Christ says ought to be done.

Our church believes that the ministries of the Lord should be supported by the members of our church. We recognize that all we have is from God. We are called to be faithful stewards of all our possessions. **Romans 14:12** says, “*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*”

SECTION M: WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT FEAR; GRIEF; SOWING DISCORD; DEPRESSION; LOW SELF-ESTEEM; TROUBLE IN YOU LIFE; ANGER; EMOTIONAL ILLNESS; FORGIVENESS; LONEILESS AND DIVORCE?

➤ **Fear**

- I Kings 1:50-52
- Luke 12:4-5
- Psalms 91:5
- Philippians 1:28

➤ **Grief**

- Psalms 6:7-8; 39:12-13
- Proverbs 25:20
- Jeremiah 9:1
- Isaiah 53:4

➤ **Sowing Discord**

- Proverbs 3:30; Proverbs 20:3
- Romans 16:17

➤ **Depression**

- Psalms 34:18-19
- Isaiah 9:2
- II Corinthians 7:6-7

➤ **Low Self-Esteem**

- Job 9:18-20
- Proverbs 16:2; 21:2
- I Corinthians 16:10

➤ **Trouble in Your Life**

- Romans 5:3-6
- Acts 14:22
- Psalms 138:7

➤ **Anger**

- Ephesians 2:3-5
- Romans 5:9
- Galatians 5:22-26

➤ **Emotional Illness**

- Proverbs 12:14
- Deuteronomy 28:65-67

➤ **Forgiveness**

- Genesis 50:17
- Psalms 51:1
- Isaiah 38:17
- Nehemiah 9:13-20

➤ **Loneliness**

- Job 19:13-21
- John 5:7-8
- II Timothy 1:4-7

➤ **Divorce**

- Matthew 19:5-6; 5:31-32
- Mark 10:2-12

SECTION N: WHAT DOES “ABIDE IN CHRIST,” MEAN TO ME AS A CHRISTIAN?

In Scripture, the words “Abide in Christ” means to remain in Him, to stay steadfast where God has placed you, and don’t attempt to place yourself. There are times that may be a sense of waiting as well as remaining. **John 15:14-17** says, *“You are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things I have heard of my Father I have made known to you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.*

How do I abide in Christ? Well one writer says, “... accept His free gift of salvation. Confess your wrong doings/sins to God, asking God for union with Christ is absolutely necessary, without it there is nothing.” As it says **John 15:5** - *“I am the vine, you are the branches, if a man remains in me and I in Him, he will bear fruit: apart from me he can do nothing.”* Stated in **Psalms 125:1** - *“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mt. Zion, which cannot be shaken, but endures forever.”*

SECTION O: HOW LONG SHOULD WE AS SAINTS OF GOD WAIT ON OUR GIFT, AND HOW DO WE KNOW WE HAVE ONE?

What does it mean your gift will make room for you? **1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 5-6** says, “*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*” You may ask, what is this all and all that the scriptures speak? Also found in **Romans 11:29, 32** - “*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*” “*For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.*”

One of the best Scriptures to get an understanding of gifts of the Spirit, will be found in **Romans 12**. One of the best ways to receive a gift and know that it indeed by and through the Holy Spirit is to be ready, (for the gifts), as found in **Romans 12:1** Paul says, “*I beseech ye therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*” **Ephesians 4 7-8** says, “*But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*” Also, in **Galatians** There are 12 gifts of the Holy Spirit listed. (**joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.**) There are other Spiritual gifts listed in the Bible, (**wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.**)

SECTION P: WHAT IS MEANT BY FASTING AND THE BENEFITS

Fasting brings some of the spiritual benefits as spoken of in Scriptures. As shown in Matthew 9:14-15, Jesus lets the people know, it was not necessary for His disciples to fast, if He was alive and walking along side of them. Fasting is a way to humble yourself, in the sight of God. Now **Psalms 35:13** says, “*Yet when they were sick, I put on sackcloth and humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosom.*” As I read these verses in Psalm 35, I hear David asking God to show his enemies who He (God) was. David wanted God to punish his enemies for what they had done to him, but this is not what fasting is for, according to scripture. God wants us to love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us, and He also want us to diligently seek Him.

In the scripture, Moses fasted at for least two 40-day periods. One of those periods is stated in **Deuteronomy 9:18** - “*Then once again I fell prostrate before the Lord for forty days and forty nights I ate no bread and drank no water. I feared the anger and wrath of the Lord, for he was angry enough with you to destroy you, because of all your sins, which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.*” Another period is stated in **Exodus 34:28** - “*And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.*”

Sometimes God will send revelation knowledge, while or after you fast. Jesus Himself also fasted for 40 days, as stated in **Matthew 4:2** - “*After fasting days and forty nights, he was*

afterwards a hungered. And when the tempter came to him he said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones to be made bread." As I finished typing these words, I glanced across the page and the Lord showed me in **Psalms 37:16** - "A little that a righteous man hath is better than any riches of many wicked." Fasting is a practice of humbling yourself before God. If you are using fasting to turn into some kind of spiritual ego boost, you've missed the point of fasting entirely. Examples of fasting: Luke 4:1-2, Jesus fasted before he began his public ministry. Nehemiah also fasted, in Nehemiah 1:4 to help him self-confess his sins to God and walk in the Spirit of God.

SECTION Q: WHY DOESN'T GOD HEAL EVERYBODY? OR DOES HE?

I John 5:14 says, sometimes God's blessings come in other ways. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us." (The 'eth' on the end of the word hear, lets us know He never tunes us out, as sometimes men do, it means continuous).

In **James 7:31** its saying, healing was sometimes used as a sign of God's authority, "And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (Spoken by Jesus to the believers, He was trying to convince those dis-believers that stood around.) Found in **II Corinthians 12:7**, sometimes God may use illnesses to accomplish His will or teach us patience. At times he would decline healing, for some parents in today's time they call it tough love. In other words, he could make you lie down to have you to look up to Him. Then, in **II Corinthians 12:8-9**, Paul, speaks of that thorn (or infirmity), in his side, "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.* Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." So sometimes I have to say, God, teach me how to use your Grace, or say Lord, "Help my unbelief." Now in **Luke 11:20** healing was used to exemplify a taste of the kingdom, "*But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.*"

Also in **Revelation 21:4**, it says to us, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

SECTION R: DO PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY LOVE GOD GET DEPRESSED?

Jesus understood us because while here on earth, he was partially human. Have you ever experienced frustration, sorrow, and temptation? In all cases, he overcame by the Word of God, His Father. Through it all, including the Cross, he withstood. Jesus welcomed outcast, stood up for women, hung out with troublemakers, and even befriended enemies. The Scripture says he wept because Jesus understands our human anxieties.

Depression can be a silent killer, so a lot of Christians suffer and feel ashamed of admitting their problems to another Christian or even non-Christians. They feel if they admit to feelings of depression, caused by life experiences such as death, divorce, incarceration of a loved one, and

many others, they feel others in the church will call them bad Christians. Scripture encourages you on many occasions. Read **Psalms 43:5** - *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why thou art disquieted within me? Hope in God for shall I yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”* Also read Psalms 43:2-3. God lets us know in **Psalms 39:7** - *“And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope in thee?”* **Psalms 31:24** says, *“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.”* Psalms being a book of hope, it continues to give those trusting in His word, to continue to do just that. Although God is a God of more than one decision, he continues to give us what to do. This would be a good time to read Psalms 43.

In **Proverbs 3:5-6** says, *“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”* Meaning that the path someone else may take, may or may not be yours, but let God order your steps.

SECTION S: WHAT DOES GOD WANT WHEN HE TELLS US TO “WITNESS”?

In **II Corinthians 5:20** reads, *“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”* In **Acts 1:8** it says, *“But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* Paul lets us know the duty and benefits of being a witness for Christ.

In the Bible, it states a witness is one who has seen or heard something of importance and told or described it to another. To be a good witness for Christ, we must strive to be just like Him. Such as in **Matthew 28 :19** - *“Go ye therefore into, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and in the name of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”* This could also mean as in **Mark 16: 15**, in order to be a good witness of what we speak, is to also live it, “And He said unto them, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”* In other words, you must humble yourselves to be a witness.

SECTION T: WHAT IS MEANT BY LAYING ON THE HANDS? AND AS A NEW CHRISTIAN; AM I ALLOWED TO LAY HANDS ON ANOTHER? INCONJUNCTION TO SECTION C #3.

In section “C” of this manual, we also explore what the Bible says concerning the phrase “laying on of hands.” There were two primary purposes for believers to lay hands on others. The first being the laying on of the hands, had to do with a person who already being ordained or commissioned by God to place their hands on a person that has been identified for an appointment to an office or a place of leadership in the church. The laying on of hands in this case is usually accompanied by an announcement of the appointment, prayer for the individual, and the placing on the head with the use of blessed oil. An example of such an anointing was when Paul reminded Timothy, in **I Timothy 4:14** *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”*

The second purpose for the laying on of hands, has to do with deliverance. Jesus taught there were signs that would follow his disciples (Children of God), and one of those signs in

Mark 16:18 reads, *“They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”* (Jesus was speaking to the eleven disciples that were left after his crucifixion, for he had just risen from the grave.) Here we see that first conditions for the laying on hands for the purpose of healing and deliverance is to be a Believer. Second would be deliverance, that these believers should always be led by God with a clear understanding that power comes by God through the Holy Ghost. Make sure that at any point you lay hands on another, you understand this power is given by the Spirit of God and not some thoughts of the flesh, in other words remain humble, and open to the voice of God. Further reading will be found in **Galatians 5:22**; **Acts 28:8**; and **Acts 13:2-3**.

SECTION U: EXPLANATION OF THE ASPECTS OF “THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD”

In section “C” of this manual, we studied what prayer is and why prayer is so important. We learned that prayer is the way we communicate with God, our Father. We have also learned that faith in God is a critical component to our relationship with God and is successful and blessed. **Hebrew 11:16** says, *“But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”* For you see when God’s people are obedient, God will make you successful, be careful what we call successful and blessed. In this lesson prayer is once again our main topic. Let’s look at **Ephesians 6:8; 10-18**. Verse 8 says, *“knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same he shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”* This is saying you can be bound but good, as Lazarus was, when Jesus called him from the grave. God does not trick you into being born again, he gives us a call and then allows us time to make up our mind. Some still will put it off, until it’s a death bed decision.

This acceptance and/or judgement is left completely up to God. As we review the armor, we will come to understand that there is an opponent, known as the enemy, that wages war against us. Read **Matthew 4:1-11**, for it was here Jesus was tempted of the devil. Yet anyone in a battle must have the proper protective gear and weapons that Believers use, which are not carnal, meaning they are not weak and physical but mighty, meaning they have impressive power. Using our weapons properly will assist us in our effort to achieve victory over the enemy as found in **II Corinthians 10:3-6**. As it starts off in verse 3, *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh...”* Stated in Ephesians 6:14-18, we as Believers engage in war, we’re instructed to use five pieces of protected gear and one weapon.

Five Pieces of Protective Gear:

1. Found in verse 14- Having girded your waist with truth (*John 8:32)
2. Found in verse 14- Having on the breast plate of righteousness (*Gen 15:6, *Rom 4:3)
3. Found in verse 15- Having shod your feet with the gospel of peace (*Mat 11:28-30, *Mat 28:18-20)
4. Found in verse 16- Above all taking the shield of faith (*Heb 11:6) with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
5. Found in verse 17- And take the helmet of salvation *(John 3:16, *Eph 2:8).

One Weapon:

6. Found in verse 17- And the Sword of the Spirit which is the word of God (* 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

This is the “Whole Armor of God” 1-5, and the Weapon being the “Word of God” - 6, to be used daily.

**Note: These are reference scriptures.*

Above is listed the Whole Armor of God, that we wear daily, and the word of God is the weapon we use as we seek God in prayer, to obtain victory over our enemy, as called out in verse 18, which encourages us in this manner. **Ephesians 6:18** - *“praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (reference scriptures - Romans 8:27; Matthew 26:41; Luke 18:1; and James 5:16).*

Learning to utilize the Whole Armor of God, protects us from the enemy and allows us to communicate effectively with God. For we are to be careful who we communicate with. Found in **Proverbs 23:7** it says, “for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; [speaking of the enemy] but his heart is not with thee.” Found in **Proverbs 8:21** it says, “*That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*”

SECTION V: HOW DO THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DIFFER FROM THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT?

There are two major things we should know concerning gifts. Number one, the major gift, is the Gift of the Holy Ghost or Spirit, this comes only with repentance. Known also as number two, there is a list of gifts that may be given without repentance. Notice one list is plural, **Gifts of the Holy Spirit**, and the other list is singular, **Fruit of the Spirit**.

In section “O”, we discuss the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now I would like to discuss the **Fruit** of that Spirit. All born again believers should ask themselves, am I bearing fruit from the gifts that God has given me? This gift that God has blessed me with is done so to advance the workings of his Kingdom. The Fruit is found in Galatians 5:22-23. Your basic list of Gifts of the Spirit is found in I Corinthians 12:8-10.

On just one subject, concerning gifts, a person could possibly write a book. So, I have decided in this section we will discuss just the Fruit of the Spirit. The two lists, being as close as they seem in words, could be easily confused. So, let us just list the Fruit: Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance. It has always helped me to see the fruit in a basket, so we can see it being given to us as one basketful, in God’s Gift of the

Holy Ghost, and not as God giving it to us one fruit at a time. It always comes all at the same time. You should notice it is called Fruit of the Spirit and not Fruits of the Spirit. Also, a way to separate the two lists is to see them pictured as a tree. From the ground down we should see the roots as the Gifts of the Spirit, and from ground up the branches on which the fruit grows, as the Fruit of the Spirit. According to the branches and the fruit they bear, it can be judged to depict how your work for the kingdom for Christ's sake is done. Man sees your branches and God sees the roots. The word fruit refers to the results that comes from product shown in your life once you commit to serving God. Paul is referring to the fruit that comes from the Spirit of God. The main thing here is to know the difference between the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that are listed in Section "O".

SECTION W: STATE "THE BEATITUDES", AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

- *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*
- *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*
- *Blessed are the which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*
- *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*
- *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*
- *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*
- *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.*
- *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you And shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*
- *Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before You.*

These Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-12 are important because these attitudes will determine your Christian lifestyle, and we are rewarded as Christians and inspired to like according to the same traits of Jesus Christ. I would explain a Beatitude as the state you find yourself in. Look at each attitude and understand what they are saying. One commentary calls them a reflection of the gospel.

SECTION X: THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP, AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO.

Praise: An expression of approval; value or merit. Praise is about God and worship is to God. Praise opens the door to worship and allows us to enter into his presence. Many commentaries say the command to praise the Lord is stated numerous times in Scriptures. Such as in **Psalms 89:5** says, "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints." Also in **Psalms 150: 1-2** it says, "Praise ye the Lord, Praise God in his sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts, praise him according to his excellent greatness." According to scriptures, praise can be done with

singing **Psalms 9:11**, with shouting **Psalms 33:3**, with dance **Psalms 150:4**, and with music **Psalm 108:1-2**.

Worship: Most dictionaries agree that it's the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity. Most commentaries agree that worship is giving of our entire self, our thoughts and emotions, to God's use. There is personal and corporate worship to remember God and thank him for the sacrifices made for our salvation. One thing I found in study of worship we must be careful to worship the correct things. In scripture, I found that God was careful of how the Ark was looked at, it was not an object to be worshipped, but the Who and What it stood for. When we worship with the bread and the wine during sacrament, it is to be completely understood, that it is now the Blood and the Word. Understanding worship is to understand to whom worship is aimed, as this is found in **Hebrews 4:16** - *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need."*

SECTION Y: HOW DO WE KNOW WE HAVE RECEIVED A REVELATION FROM GOD?

I found one commentary that declared five ways. The first thing is said, if you really want to hear, you must be ready to listen. Someone told me a story a long time ago about how he told God he wanted to see Him face to face. The room started to shake, a loud unbearable noise like a train started up, it sounded like a rushing mighty wind. Then he told God never mind. God said to him, see, you can't stand to hear me coming, how can you stand to see me? Motives are important when wanting to hear from God. Ask and then be ready to receive.

Five ways you may be already hearing:

1. Scriptures begins to jump out at you, they have a special meaning for you and are pertinent to what you need.
2. God will speak to you through dreams and visions, and it will not be confusing, just have faith and believe.
3. You will begin to hear his voice through your prayer time. Remember he says, "His sheep knows His voice."
4. You will receive answers you didn't know you needed. It could come from a child, or someone who doesn't understand Scripture as much as you do.
5. God will make you more sensitive to his voice and adjust your hearing. Also remember he says in **Proverbs 3:5-6**, *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding, In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall [not maybe, but shall] direct thy paths."*

The Holy Ghost will prepare you to hear from God. He will provide a way and means as listed above. He will provide the means to understand and do, including the ways necessary to receive a revelation from God. God reveals himself to his disciples, such as teachers, preachers, and prophets. Read Amos 7:10-17, here you will see how God revealed himself to a prophet and

leader. God is long-suffering with his people, but he will get weary of even his own, who will not listen to his voice.

SECTION Z: DOES THE BIBLE SAY WE MUST GO TO CHURCH?

The church is not beneficial just because of the building. Remember, Jesus sat his followers on the ground, on the side of a mountain. It's beneficial, because we are so needful of the Word. We hunger and thirst, and they searched the same way we do today. We become involved in a community that supports, encourages each other, and receive the ministry that it supplies. Also remember, Jesus beat the tax collectors out of the temple and any that were selling wares for their own benefit.

When asking yourself this question, ask yourself, "Why you go to church?" or "Is church necessary for living a Christian life?" This answer is not just a simple yes or no. We have to know there are members who cannot come on Sunday mornings for various reasons. Does this make them less a Christian than you are? Remember, God looks at the heart, for your reason. Let's look at **Ephesians 2:8-9** it says, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.*"

Please don't start to think church can't or won't function just because you are not there. Remember why we are saved, why we go to church in the first place, look at what Timothy says in God's Word, **II Timothy 1:9** - "*Who hath saved us, and called us with an Holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*" Jesus stated, at one time in **Mark 2:27**, "*And he said unto them, **The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.***"

Read **Mark 12:23-28**, you will also see He teaches that an ongoing, interactive, relationship with him is of greater importance than merely attending to the humanly crafted rules of religious behavior, although God did admonish us to gather together. As stated in **Hebrew 10:24-25** - "*And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is....*"

So, you see we need church for our soul's sake, not as just proof to others, but more for ourselves. I was so glad to come back after COVID, because I love to see the operations of the Holy Spirit. It's nothing like being reminded of when you came to the altar for the first time. It's like being there in the upper room.

