



God's Holy Mountain Ministry
Mentoring

Touching Hearts



When we are born into this world, we need the nurture and care of loving people - parents who feed us, look after our needs, teach us to speak, communicate with this world, help us understand who we are, and how we can become independent, and subsequently, also become good parents.

When we are born again as spiritual babies, we also need spiritual milk, care, guidance in the spiritual life, an understanding of who we are in Christ, and how we can become spiritual parents to another person.

As ministers of counseling for more than 20 years, and having pastoral experience, we have consulted many people, from different countries and different churches.

In the course of our ministry, we have seen that many of the problems in the lives of Christians, born again people, often have their root in the fact that from the moment they are born again, they have not experienced good spiritual care, instruction and consecrated love. Sometimes counseling consisted of partial instruction in the basic truths of the Kingdom of God!

And hearing these truths, people, being believers, often exclaimed for decades: "Why has no one ever told me about this, and no one taught me?!"

They had not recognized the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is Immanuel, the One Who is with us. The One who lives with you every day of your life, in your daily activities, in your family, at work, and in everything that we may consider "unspiritual."

And often the lives of believers, people who go to church on Sundays, and sometimes those who serve in church, can be difficult because of the lack of real care and instruction when they are born again.

Perhaps they did not have spiritual parents, their love, care, guidance, and sometimes loving correction.

God created us and prepared a wonderful life plan for us, and He knows best what is best for us.

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

We believe that an important stage in our spiritual life path in faith is mentoring.

What is the essence of mentoring?

Our God is a God of relationships who created us to have an intimate relationship with Him and with each other.

And in the pages of Scripture, He says many times that He loves, is jealous, and is upset because we do not turn to Him as a Father for the solution of our problems and life issues. He wants to educate us and spend time with us alone (in secret). He wants to cooperate with us, not just give orders in anticipation of unquestioning obedience. But, many people cannot understand the true image of God, and cannot believe that God is interested in them personally, and not merely in their actions or ministries. Of course, He wants us to serve Him, not as slaves, but as children and heirs who share in the work of their Good Father.

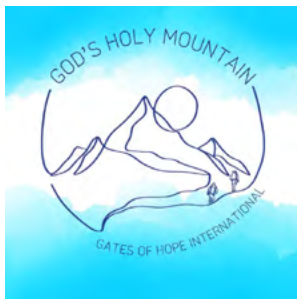
The purpose of mentoring is to introduce a person to Immanuel (God with us). This is one of the Names of Jesus Christ.

It is important that a person experiences God's personal care in his or her life.

And for this, God needs a person who will agree to be His voice, His hands, His Love, His care! This role in the work of God is fulfilled by a mentor who will dedicate his or her life for 20 weeks to another person for weekly meetings and prayerful fellowships based on the mentoring materials.

We invite you on this exciting journey with God and others who want to get to know Him better.

With blessings, the leaders of the "God's Holy Mountain" Ministry - Kushnarev Mikhail and Olga.



Telegram channel: <https://t.me/HGMountain>

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YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@HGMountain>

Web site: <https://hgmountain.com/>

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How to use this manual

All material is divided into 10 weeks. Each week discusses a specific Bible truth. The week is divided into 5 sections (days). Study one of the 5 sections of the week every day for 15-30 minutes.

Take only one lesson per day. Study the lesson with the Bible handy.

You can print out the materials of the week and use a pencil or pen to answer the questions. You can also make notes of what you do not understand for further discussion with the mentor.

We encourage you to keep a journal of the revelations you receive from God through discipleship, Bible reading, and prayer. This will help you strengthen your relationship with God and help you further on your Christian journey.

Take the tasks and answers to the questions posed very seriously.

Don't be afraid to answer questions honestly, even if those answers are "wrong" or don't follow the rules of the world around you. No one will evaluate you. But the honesty and sincerity of your answers will first of all help you get to the truth.

All materials have video accompaniment that will help you and your mentor on this journey through the Kingdom of God. You can find the video material on our YouTube channel. YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@HGMountain>

Once a week (if you wish, you can do more) you will meet with your mentor at a time and place convenient for you. The duration of the meeting can last 1-2 hours.

Let us pray for you:

Father, we pray to You for Your beloved child. We ask You to bless their journey to study Your truths that You have revealed in the pages of the Bible. May Your Holy Spirit reveal these truths to Your child. And may the knowledge of the truth make them free in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen!

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Week № 1. God's Love

Day № 1. Types of love

In the world in which you and I were born and grew up, we encounter different types of love. The Bible mentions and distinguishes between several types of love. There are different words in the Greek language that describe these types of love. In English, (*would it be better to say English here?*) we use one word "love" for different situations and relationships.

The Bible mentions several types of love: phileo (φιλία), storge (στοργή), agape (ἀγάπη), and eros (ἔρως). Three of them describe the relationship of love between people, these are: phileo, storge, eros. One kind of love describes the relationship of God's love to people, that is, to me and to you. This love is agape.

Let's consider all these types of love in order.

Phileo (Ancient Greek: φιλία) means "friendship", but also "friendliness", "disposition", "attraction", "attraction", "love". This kind of love mainly occurs between friends.

There is an example of a strong friendship in the Bible:

1 SAMUEL 18:1-2 *After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself. From that day Saul kept David with him and did not let him return home to his family.*

Storge (στοργή) -The ancient Greeks called family, kinship love, affection, the love that parents feel for their children and, accordingly, the love of children for their parents. There are many examples of such love between relatives in the Bible.

Matthew 7:11 *If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him!*

Eros (ἔρως) is a strong and passionate form of love that evokes romantic and sexual feelings

Genesis 29:18 *Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."*

Genesis 29:20 *So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.*

Agape (ἀγάπη) This is selfless love - self-giving. Agape is sacrificial love, selfless self-giving, the dissolution of the lover in caring for the beloved. Everything is here - passion, tenderness, reliability, and selfless devotion.

1 John 4:8-11 *Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Perhaps you have experienced all kinds of love in your life, if this is so, you are a happy person! Perhaps someone has not experienced any of these types of love, or maybe someone has experienced one or more types of love. One thing is for sure, we need love, we want to have it in our lives! Life without love loses all meaning and joy.

Answer the questions:

Which of the 4 types of love have you experienced in your life? _____

Did your parents show love to you? _____

Have you ever had a crush on someone? _____

Did you have a strong friendship with anyone? _____

Do you believe that God loves you unconditionally, just because you are? _____

Prayer:

Dear God, I am in great need of love, I want to love and be loved.

Please help me to experience a lot of love in life.

I thank You for loving me! Amen.



Week № 1. God's Love

Day № 2. God's Love - what is it?

1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Romans 5:8-1 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!



Describe in your own words how you understand God's love:



In order to advance in understanding and experiencing God's love, we need to compare our understanding with what God Himself says! Many people have a subconscious image of God and an inner feeling of being close to Him. We will try to understand what the Bible tells us about God's love—agape. **God loves us with unconditional love.** We can neither deserve it, nor earn it, nor lose it.

***Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

He loves us simply because He loves, this is His attitude towards us and it does not depend on us, or our behaviour. **His love accepts us as we are.**

Read **Luke 15:11-24**. It is difficult for us to understand this, because we are not accepted unconditionally in ordinary life. We always need to meet certain standards. To be smarter, more beautiful, braver, more decent, taller, shorter, thinner, fatter, etc. But God accepts us unconditionally - He likes us, He enjoys us, **His love is jealous.**

***James 4:5** Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us?*

Song of Songs 8:6 Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.

Because God's love for us is so strong, so sacrificial, unconditional, and jealous. God loves us so much that when we "cheat" on Him, He will suffer greatly! God's love is caring. God, as a Father passionately in love with us, will protect us from anything that can harm us.

In **Hebrews 12:6-8** the Father is saying that He will discipline us for our good. Unconditional acceptance and unconditional love may seem to exclude all punishment or discipline, but God's love contains both.

1 Peter 5:6-7 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. Cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for you.*

Matthew 6:31-34 *So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

God's love is beyond human experience. That is why it is difficult for people to understand God's love, because we have no earthly experience of such love! It is difficult to understand, and it must be accepted by faith.

Ephesians 3:16-19 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the LORD's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

So we have seen what the Bible tells us about God's love.

God's love is the foundation of our relationship with God. It is on the basis of His attitude towards us that we build our relationship with Him. When I first came into contact with God's love, it was very difficult for me to believe, much less to feel it. And I received very important advice from one of my mentors. I will share this advice with you: you just need to believe in God's love!

1 John 4:16 *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.*

We need to come to terms with two facts of our life:

- ❖ None of us is worthy of such love and such an attitude towards us.
- ❖ God loves us infinitely, immensely, passionately, and we need to make peace with the truth that we are precious in His eyes.

Now let's describe once again how you feel when you realize that you are so loved by God?

Week № 1. God's Love

Day № 3. Why does God love me?

Psalm 8:4-5 *What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour.*

This question has always interested all people throughout the history of the Earth. Many people, unable to find an answer to this question, could not believe in God's love for them. When we take an honest look at our lives, it can feel like we have nothing to love for.

There will always be people who firmly believe that they are worthy of love and others are not. Some people may say that murderers, rapists, robbers, traitors, etc., are not worthy of God's love.

Let's try to answer these questions:

Are "bad" people worthy of God's love?	Yes	☐	No	☐	I don't know	☐	Other	
Are "good" people worthy of God's love?	Yes	☐	No	☐	I don't know	☐	Other	
Am I worthy of God's love?	Yes	☐	No	☐	I don't know	☐	Other	

Our answers to these questions are influenced by the conventions to which we are accustomed. We are used to always evaluating people in our lives, and writing them down in the category of "good" and "bad". We are also used to evaluating ourselves and also writing ourselves down in one of these categories. We really don't want to fall into the category of "bad" people, and we try our best to be "good" and acceptable to the culture and society in which we live. These attitudes permeate all kinds of relationships, and often the feeling of inferiority, stain, unsuitability can fill us. And if we succeed in something (at work, in sports, in relationships with the opposite sex...), we tend to write ourselves down as "good" people.



Let's answer a few more questions:

How often do I justify my actions?
and thoughts in front of people?

Often ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other

How often do I condemn actions
and other people's thoughts?

Often ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ Other

The Bible describes a very important law of human life:

Luke 6:31 *Do to others as you would have them do to you.*

Describe in your own words how you understand this principle:



Very often we want other people to be held accountable for their misdeeds, and for us to be shown leniency. It is precisely because we judge other people and do not accept them as God accepts us that we become incapable of experiencing God's love and forgiving others.

Let's also get acquainted with one of the most important laws of human life:

Matthew 7:1-2 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Why do you think God does not allow us to judge others (mark) ☐

We do bad things just like others ☐

God doesn't trust us to judge other people ☐

If we judge, we will have consequences ☐

We will not be able to experience God's love All of the above So, let's summarize and try to answer the question "Why does God love me?"



Answering this question, we understand that the question itself contains an insidious trick arising from our cultural understanding. We are so used to being loved for something!!

But we need to come to terms with the fact that God loves all people, both "bad" and "good," equally.

John 3:16-17 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*

Prayer:

*God the Father, thank You for Your love for me and for all people,
for Your mercy and forgiveness!*

Day № 4. Jesus: The Embodiment of God's Love

We have learned that God loves us and other people and that this does not depend on their behaviour. Yet we cannot agree with the injustice: some people clearly do more evil than others, how can God love everyone equally so unfairly?! And how can these two qualities of justice and unconditional love be combined in Him?

God the Father has one answer to this question – His Son, Jesus Christ!

Let's pray, *"Father, help me know Your Son, Jesus Christ!"*

Why did I offer to pray about this? Because Jesus says this:

John 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.*

And now let us continue to answer a very difficult question: how can perfect justice and perfect love and mercy coexist simultaneously in the heart of God?

Perfect justice requires that each of us answer for our crimes and sins. Perfect (unconditional) love says that we are accepted and loved regardless of what we have done and are doing. And these are mutually exclusive concepts!

And now the most amazing moment of truth. We will delve into the mystery of God's purpose and His perfect plan for us.

God's word says that the penalty for sin (transgression against God) is death (eternal separation from God).

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, ...*

Are there any people at all who have not sinned against God and are not in a state of death? Most likely, there will be people who will say: "I did nothing wrong, did not kill, did not steal, etc." If they have done nothing wrong against people (as it seems to them), then God thinks otherwise. Here is what His word declares about the condition of mankind:

Romans 3:10-18 *As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one". "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit". "The poison of vipers is on their lips". "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness". "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know.". "There is no fear of God before their eyes".*

So, God says that all of humanity is in a state of death and is separated from God and His love and mercy. God's justice demands that this law be fulfilled!

For all have sinned, and all have fallen short of the glory of God. In our condition, we have only one destiny, and that is to be condemned to eternal death! So how can God fulfill His desire to love and have mercy on us if He is hindered by His own justice, which says that we must be rejected and punished?

And this is how God the Father solved this issue:

He sent His Son to become a man and take our punishment upon Himself. He loved us so much that he refused to spend eternity without us. That is why His love sacrificed His Son. And the Son agreed to give His life for us!

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 *Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

Romans 3:22-26 *This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.*

And now God the Father has decided the question of His perfect justice and His perfect love. His Son took the penalty for our sin, which is why Jesus died, and God the Father turned away from Him at the moment of His crucifixion and Jesus descended into hell. But since He Himself is without sin, He is resurrected (this is evidence of victory over both sin and death - the result of sin)!

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is evidence of the payment for our sin!

Now thank God the Father for His Love for you



Romans 5:8-17. Read and describe in your own words how you understand why God the Father loves you with perfect

(unconditional) love, and does not require perfection from you _____

Day № 5. Will I be able to love?

Congratulations, you are now among the people who have learned the most amazing news, that you are loved by the Father forever, perfectly, and no one can separate you from that love!

Romans 8:33-39 *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:*

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. ”No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God's love belongs to us forever. We are precious, dear, beautiful, fully justified, the Father delights in us, He has called us His children.

And now let's try to answer the question: will I be able to love? I will share with you a short testimony from my life:

One day, in a Christian school, where I was first introduced to the perfect love of God, I heard this truth about God's love.

The people who served us at this school allowed God to show their love through them, and I was able to experience God's love and acceptance. This truth filled my heart. Sometimes I cried with happiness, and this love filled my heart every day of school! It was one of the most significant and fateful experiences of my life. I flew on wings with happiness. People have told me that my expression has changed. It would seem that here is a moment of happiness and you can bathe in this happiness forever!

When I experienced it, I could no longer be silent, I wanted to talk about it, and I wanted to do something for other people, and I began to feel the pain of other people's hearts. For the first time in my life, I felt freedom from the slavery of selfishness.

I was able to love! I was able to give without expecting anything in return. It was real, unselfish love of God that filled my heart. It was He who enabled me to forgive those who brought me a lot of pain. When I forgave, it brought me a freedom and ease that I had never experienced in my life! For the first time, I felt how beautiful a person is and what he is capable of when God's love fills his heart.

1 John 4:10-18 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has*

sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

And here is the answer to the question: will I be able to love?

Yes, we can love if we allow God's love to fill our emptiness and heal the wounds of our heart. If we believe that we are beloved, then we will definitely succeed. Moreover, we will be able to do much more than before.

Romans 8:37 *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* And now the moment has come when we can say to God the Father the words of faith in His love for us.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for loving me so much. You gave Your Son, Jesus, to die for my sin! You couldn't live without me. Forgive me for not believing in Your love for me and living like an orphan. Today, I open my heart to Your love and believe that I am unconditionally accepted and loved by Your perfect love.

Thank you for Your love!

And now a small errand:

Can you tell someone about God's love? It can be anyone: dad, mum, brother, sister, classmate, work colleague, just a person you know. You don't have to, but you could give someone the opportunity to learn about God's love and change a person's destiny.



Tell your mentor about this adventure: _____

Day № 1. Trust

One of the descriptions of the word "faith" is the word trust. Everything we trust, we let into our lives. There are no people who do not trust someone or something. There is always information that we trust. The most important question is: who is behind this or that information and is it true?

Trust is confidence in someone's good faith, sincerity, in the correctness of something and an attitude towards someone based on this.

We hear information from various sources: parents, close friends, acquaintances, influential (successful) people, government, media, scientists, books, the Internet, films, blogs, social networks, educational institutions, etc. For example: A mathematics teacher at school always said that mathematics is the basis of all sciences and without its study you cannot live on earth. For this reason, we have invested part of our lives in the study of mathematics. Later in the process of growing up, we discovered that there are things much more important than mathematics. And unless we have chosen a career as a scientist or a financier, we have found that mathematics is not used as often in everyday life. And what is much more important to study is relationships with other people! And in this matter, mathematics can even get in the way.

So, let's return to the context of trusting God! Can He be trusted? And, in general, how do we know if He exists? And which of the gods in this world is true? Ah, this holy book the Bible, can it be trusted? And who wrote it? Why should we choose the Bible over some other book about God or religion? Or maybe we will refuse to believe in the supernatural at all and choose to trust scientists who claim that the existence of God cannot be proved. If we blindly trust something, then it is foolhardy to trust this source to control our lives. Therefore, we will try to understand this issue more deeply. Although we gave a negative example with mathematics, we will turn to mathematics in order to figure out what can be trusted (since it is a very useful science). Two plus two is four. Two minus two will be zero (that is, nothing). This is the truth and it cannot be otherwise. And there are no other solutions in these examples. They will always be true and any different solution will always be wrong.

Therefore, in order to understand what is truth, it is necessary to look at the facts about the Bible and test it for truth.

But before we get down to that, let's answer a few questions:

1. What you trust in your life:

- ❖ Self ☐
- ❖ Scientists ☐
- ❖ Your feelings ☐
- ❖ Mass media ☐
- ❖ Religious books ☐
- ❖ Horoscopes ☐
- ❖ Parents ☐
- ❖ Close friends ☐
- ❖ Nobody ☐
- ❖ Other _____



2. Why you trust the source you choose (describe the reason)

3. Have you ever had an experience in your life where you were disappointed when you trusted someone?

Let's read the Bible a little and look at some of the statements:

Isaiah 45:21-22 *Declare what is to be, present it — let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none but me. “Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.*

Isaiah 45:5-6 *I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.*

John 14:4-6 *You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

How do these Bible verses make you feel?



Week № 2. Faith That Brings Life

Day № 2. The Bible - The Word of God

Everything we can learn about God is written in the Bible! The Bible is also called Scripture or the Word of God. But the question remains: Who wrote the Bible? The answer will be simple: the Bible was written by people.

The Bible consists of 66 books. 39 of which make up the Old Testament and 27 make up the New Testament. The Old and New Testaments are separated by the birth of Jesus Christ. It was written by 40 people who lived at different times for many centuries.

There's another question: Who inspired these people to write these books? In order to understand this, let's give one example from the world of business: Let's assume that you are the head of a company and you are away for a while on a business trip. At this time, your secretary calls you and says that there is an issue on the agenda that requires an urgent solution. You, as a manager, tell the secretary (authorized person) what needs to be written and ask them to sign a letter on your behalf and certify this letter with a seal.



Please answer the following questions:

Who wrote the letter? _____

Who is the author of the letter? _____

And what if the secretary in your absence, after reading the letter that you dictated, decides to make changes on his own behalf and signs this letter on your behalf and certifies it with a seal. What will you do when you return from a business trip?

So, the most important question is not who wrote the Bible, but who is its author? And can the author control that His words remain unchanged?

1 Peter 1:10-12 *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.*

This passage of Scripture tells us that the prophets tried to understand what they themselves had written.

2 Peter 1:19-21 *We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

Thus, the Apostle Peter states that prophecy is not pronounced by the will of man, but it comes from God.

Now let us answer the question: Can the Author control His words so that they remain unchanged?

Jeremiah 1:12 *The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled."*

Isaiah 55:8-11 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

Matthew 5:17-18 *Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

Revelation 22:18-19 *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.*



What do you think of the above Bible verses:

Who wrote the Bible? _____

Who is the author of the Bible? _____

Can the Bible Author control His words? _____

Week № 2. Faith That Brings Life

Day № 3. Who is Jesus?

We will begin this lesson with the Scripture about the main work of a person's entire life. Do you want to know what this is?

John 6:28-29 *Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."*

It turns out that the main business of a person's life is to believe in Jesus Christ. In who He is and what He has done for us.

What is special about this Man? The biggest feature is that He is not just a man, He is God.

Read: **John 1:1-4** This Scripture tells us that originally, before Jesus became man, He created everything we see: the stars, the planets, the earth, the animals, the people...

John 1:14 Another of Jesus' Names is the Son of God. And this is not just a metaphor or a nickname – it is a fact of His life.

Luke 1:30-35 *But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his Kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

Is it possible that Jesus was a hypocrite posing as someone he was not?

Does this question shock you?

Maybe even offends? Think about it.

Which of these statements about Jesus do you consider to be true?

A great Teacher ☐ A great man ☐ Religious Prophet ☐ The True God ☐

Read **John 10:30** What did Jesus teach about his relationship with God the Father?

Read **John 8:56-58** What did Jesus say about the length of His life?

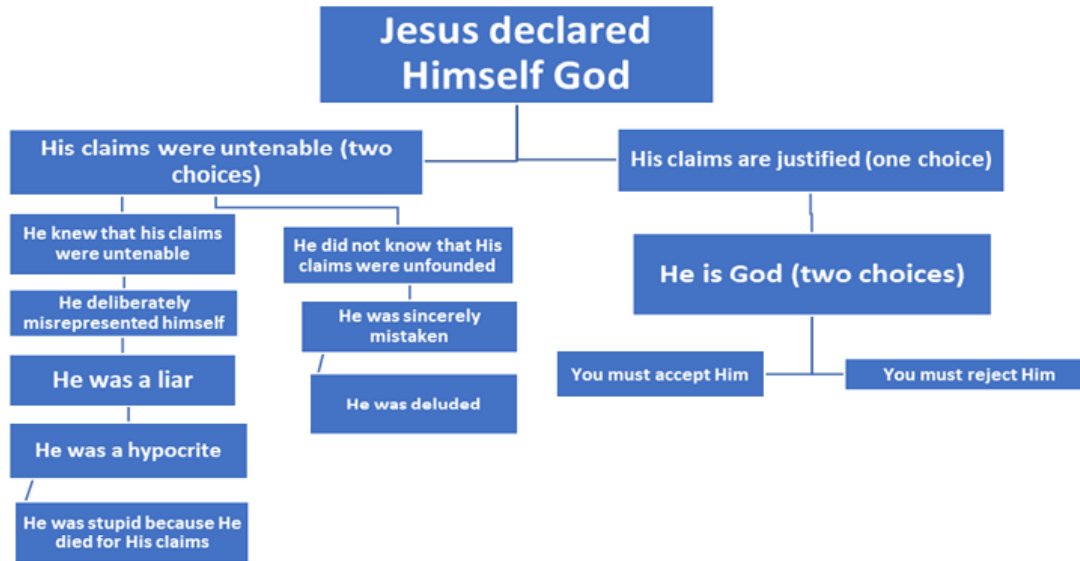
Read **John 14:9** Whom did Jesus say they saw when they saw Him?

What title did Jesus directly claim?

A great Teacher ☐ A great man ☐ Religious Prophet ☐ The True God ☐

Such statements by Jesus leave us with no arguments! We only have three alternatives, pictured in this diagram:





What statement can we agree with? Would you take the time to study the work of the man who radically changed the world? If you answer "Yes," you must accept His radical claims.

He didn't say He was like God, but that He was God!

Week № 2. Faith That Brings Life

Day № 4. Faith is a condition for paradise

I am sure that you already feel something amazingly beautiful when you study Bible truths. Anyone who has ever taken the time to study the Bible has not gone unrewarded!

Let's see how God reacts to trying to find out something about Him:

Hebrews 11:6 (New English Translation). *Now without faith it is impossible to please him, for the one who approaches God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

In this section, we will touch on the issue of "hell" and "heaven". We have undoubtedly heard about these concepts in our lives. But, here's the question? Does what we have heard correspond to what God's Word, the Bible, says?

Here is what the Bible says about hell:

Mark 9:42-44 *If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out.*

Jesus warns us that even physical injury cannot be compared to going to hell. And that this is a place from which there is no way out and no hope, and the stay in it lasts forever.

Read **Luke 16:19-31**

Answer the questions:

Is it possible to get out of the place called "hell"?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

Who will go to "hell"?

Rich ☐ "Bad" people ☐ I ☐ "My Neighbour" ☐ Those Who Did Not Accept Jesus ☐



Now let's see how the Bible answers this question:

John 3:16-19 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

John 5:24 Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

So, the Bible states that those who believe that Jesus paid for their sins with His death will not go to "hell," but will live forever with God and others who have been cleansed by His sacrifice for their sins. This place is called "paradise"

Let's take another look at the conditions for getting into heaven.

Here are the words Jesus said to the criminal who was hanging next to Him on the cross:

Luke 23:39-43 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

What did the criminal do in order to get to "heaven"?

He was a good man ☐ He did more good things than bad ones ☐ Believed in Jesus Christ ☐ .

God the Father did everything in His power to prevent us from falling into this terrible place. But the choice is always ours. To believe in what Jesus Christ has done and who He is or to reject Him. The choice you make will determine your place in eternity. Are you ready to say "Yes" to Jesus?

Read **Romans 10:9-10**

Prayer: "Heavenly Father! I come to You in the name of Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus is the Son of God; He died for me, took my sins upon Himself, and rose again on the third day. I ask You to forgive my sins. Jesus Christ, please come into my heart, be my Lord and Saviour. Amen."

Congratulations - you have become part of the Kingdom of God and have become one of those who go to "paradise"!!



Week № 2. Faith That Brings Life

Day № 5. Be like children

Matthew 18:1-5 *At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?” He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

To be like a child, you just need to trust God, as children trust their father. When my daughter was 3-4 years old, I could put her on an elevation of 1.5 to 2 metres and encourage her to jump into my arms. I was always surprised that she jumped from a great height with great readiness and pleasure into my arms, my father's hands.

What helped her to trust me? What do we expect from a father?

That the father always:

- ❖ is kind and has good intentions towards us;
- ❖ is wise and knows how to live and what is good for us and what is bad for us;
- ❖ is strong and has the power to cover, protect and save us.

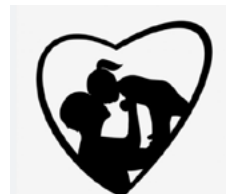
Unfortunately, we have not always seen these qualities in our earthly fathers, and it is difficult for us to trust God the Father either. But let's look at our heavenly Father as He is.

Matthew 7:9-11 *Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!*

Read **Luke 15:11-24** Such an attitude of God the Father towards us is staggering. But this is what God Himself says of Himself, as He is!

Answer the question: Are you ready to jump into Heavenly Father's loving arms? Are you afraid that he will let you down?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____



John 14:8-10 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.



Everything Jesus did was actually done by the Father, because Jesus only did what the Father said!

Once I heard the following story:

The father put his son on high ground and said to his young son, "Jump into my arms, I will catch you, and you will experience joy and happiness." The son replied: "I believe that you will catch me, but I will not jump."

Tell me, did the son really believe his father if he refused to jump into his arms?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

Usually, we only do what we believe in and that will bring us success, happiness, and fulfillment. But do we believe that our Father has great plans for our lives?

James 2:18-20 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?



Our deeds and actions speak louder than our words. Very often our actions can differ from what we say. Sometimes we find it difficult to trust God as children because there weren't many people in our lives that we could trust. It is this kind of "childlike trust" that touches the heart of our Father in Heaven very much, because He knows how difficult it is for us to trust Him. You see how important it is to have a childlike trust in God and how great it is to have a Father to whom we can entrust our lives.

Prayer:

Father, help me trust You like a child. Amen.

Week № 3. What is sin?

Day № 1. Biblical Definition of Sin

Read the first three chapters of Genesis!

God is our Creator, Father, Love, and lawful authority.

Not only is He the Source of life who settled the first pair of people here on earth, He is the wise and loving Guide of this life. His intentions and plans for us are good, perfect, and life-giving.

God planned for humans to be His representatives on earth and a reflection of His beauty and glory!

He wanted to reveal Himself to all creation through a loving relationship with the human beings He had created in His image.

A true relationship of love is impossible without mutual choice. It was important that a person could voluntarily choose Him as the Source of life, guidance, wisdom, strength and be with Him in a relationship of love!

He created us for Himself and always wanted to be with us forever!!

But without free will, there can be no true relationship of love, which is why God the Creator leaves man a choice:

To choose God as the source of life, wisdom, power, glory, and love, or to choose to exist independently of Him.

Genesis 2:15–17 *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.*

Here was the position of Adam and Eve in the hierarchy of creation:

They had been given the privilege of showing the Lord to all creation through a relationship with Him.

At the same time, in order for this relationship to last forever, God gave man the opportunity to live forever through the choice of relationship with Him - the Tree of Life!

But God also warned man that if they chose to live independently from the Creator, then there would be a separation in their relationship with the Creator, who is Life Itself, and death would come.



We were given life, but on the condition of a relationship with God, outside of Whom there is no life for us.
Life and obedience to God are one and the same.



Sin is not just bad deeds. Sin is the absence of God's order.

Sin is the lack of unity with God.

Sin is independence from the Source of Life.

Sin is to be the god in our lives and to determine what is good and what is evil for us.

Genesis 3:5 *"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

Sin is a direct rebellion against the lawful authority of the Creator. All deeds, even good deeds that are not under the authority of God and not for His sake, are sin. One of the translations of the word sin is the concept of missing the mark, a miss!

All the actions and deeds of a person who is in a separate and independent state from God are sinful! Even if they look good. All these actions are fruits; their root is INDEPENDENCE from God. In this state, man is his own god. And what does God do? He creates, gives a statute to His creation, judges and carries out the sentence. Every person who is in a state of separation from God is irreconcilable. He is not able to obey (voluntarily), because he considers himself a god, and gods do not need decrees. He also judges everyone around him, defining in his own way, good and evil. And having condemned, he carries out the sentence, that is, he punishes another. This is the order in which all people on earth exist. They do things their own way, they are independent, they judge everyone around them, and they have the sentence carried out against them.



Let's talk about you and answer a few questions

Do you consider yourself a sinner? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐; Other _____

Do you like to obey? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐; Other _____

Do you judge other people? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐; Other _____

Do you feel guilty about the actions of your life? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐; Other _____

Are there people you can't forgive? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐; Other _____

Are there any things in your life that you can't forgive yourself for? Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐ Other _____

Are there any things in your life that you are proud of? Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

In your opinion, will you go to heaven? Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

Let us look at God's assessment of the condition of mankind

Isaiah 64:6-7 *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you: for you have hidden your face from us and have given us over to our sins.*

Romans 3:10-18 *As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know." "There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

This is God's assessment of the condition of mankind! And the last two questions:



Can people, without God, do righteous (good) deeds?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

Are there people on earth without sin? Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know ☐ Other _____

Discuss all these questions with your mentor

Week № 3. What is sin?

Day № 2. Punishment for Sin

We have already talked a little about the fact that the punishment for sin is death (that is, eternal separation from God). And the question arises: will a kind and loving God really send people to hell?!



Read **Matthew 25:31-46, Matthew 25:41** Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Answer the question: for whom is hell prepared? _____

Yes, the Lord never planned for people to go to hell with the devil and his angels. Why will people still go to hell? And why would the Lord allow this to happen?

The main answer to this question is the free choice of a person. God the Father has done everything to prevent you and me from going to hell. He paid for our sin by sending Jesus Christ to earth and He (Jesus) died for our sin. We don't have to die anymore. But if we do not voluntarily accept the Sacrifice of Jesus into our lives, we will simply remain in a state of death (separation from God). And if we, having died physically, do not accept God's gift, then the state of death (separation from God) will remain forever.

Colossians 2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

1 John 5:10-12 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

This is God's condition for accepting life, and if we do not obey Him, then this is sin!



So, let's summarize and answer the question: why can people go to hell?:

I've always wanted to ask God to just save everyone. And, potentially, every person has salvation and eternal life. But if God had answered my request, then He would have taken away free choice from man, whom He created in His image. Therefore, salvation from hell takes the form of offering or preaching the gospel:



2 Peter 3:8-9 *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

Acts 17:30-31 *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."*

God the Father invites all people throughout the earth to REPENT, that is, to renounce their independent life from Him and accept the Sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, as payment for our sin. If we accept God's condition for justification, we will be saved and enter into eternal life with God!

And now let us learn the main rule of God for forgiveness and getting into heaven:

❖ This is repentance for one's sin!

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





I suggest that you memorize this verse

Let's answer a few questions:

Why will people go to hell? _____

What do they need to do to get to heaven? _____

Does God want people to go to hell? _____

Week № 3. What is sin?

Day № 3. Self-Righteousness

When sin is forgiven by God, blessings can come into the realm of life where the sin was, and we are tempted to think that it is because I have earned that blessing myself. Unfortunately, we often tend to think that we deserve God's favour. But God does not love us for our merits and His favour is not the fruit of our works.

Let's look at an example of God's relationship with His people in the Old Testament:

Deuteronomy 9:1-5 *Hear, Israel: You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities that have walls up to the sky. The people are strong and tall—Anakites! You know about them and have heard it said: "Who can stand up against the Anakites?" But be assured today that the LORD your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire. He will destroy them; he will subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them quickly, as the LORD has promised you. After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you. It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

Deuteronomy 8:17 *You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."*

After the Fall, the human spirit, capable of having communion with God, passed into a state of separation from God, that is, spiritual death. And it is impossible to overcome the state of death on your own! Realizing the full extent of the catastrophe, people began to make attempts to return to God on their own.

Let's describe how these attempts can look like: Attempts to satisfy God on their own have turned into many religious systems around the world with their own rules and order.

The basic formula of any religion is a set of rules that are intended to lead to perfection! This is self-righteousness, that is, an attempt to justify oneself by one's own strength.

- ❖ Through good deeds. To the extent that man now knows what good and evil are, people try to please God and become acceptable to Him through good works. And usually people try to find their salvation through doing good deeds. But the truth lies elsewhere.
- ❖ Through witchcraft or spiritualistic seances. People are still trying to return to the spiritual reality where God dwells on their own. And they are trying in various ways to reach supernatural reality and gain the power to live.

Also, one of the most acceptable ways of self-righteousness is going to church. So many people all over the world believe that going to church (going to temples, meetings, etc.) pleases God and brings them closer to Him.



All of these attempts to please God and draw closer to Him are not true and do not correspond to God's plan of salvation. All of them are based on human efforts and depend on people themselves.

Matthew 19:25-26 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

The main sin is disbelief in God's way of salvation! It is an attempt to justify oneself in one's own strength and to live independently of the Lord.

John 16:7-11 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me;

about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

Proper repentance is repentance without justification or seeking someone to blame.

- ❖ It is to take responsibility for the fact that it was me, and not someone else, who committed the sin.
- ❖ It is repentance of unbelief in God's plan of salvation through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

One of the wrong ways to repent is to try to shift the responsibility for one's sin to others. For example: "If it wasn't for this evil teacher, I wouldn't have done it." "If he hadn't betrayed me, I wouldn't have done this." "If my parents were different, I would have done things differently." All of these statements implicitly state that if other "bad" people hadn't influenced me, then I, the "good" one, wouldn't have done evil.

This is the root of self-righteousness - the belief that I am inherently «good» and that I can do the right thing myself, accomplish salvation, and satisfy God!

Week № 3. What is sin?

Day № 4. Who is the owner? Who is the servant?

Step by step, we are moving together towards a new victorious life in Jesus Christ. We have already accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour and now we are faced with the task of living daily in victory over the sin that had power over us in our lives before repentance.

WHO IS IN CHARGE IN MY LIFE? A person who comes to God in prayer often has many requests: " Lord, heal my mother," "Help me excel at school or at work," "Bless my marriage," "Help me get married," "Give me wisdom and patience."

In the flood of our requests, there may be a temptation to see God as a servant whom we have added to our lives for our own blessing and convenience. God loves us deeply and listens to our requests with joy. But we must always realize that we are servants, and He is the Master. As our loving Master, He will provide for us and take care of us. As His servants, we must first hear His voice and obey with joy.

The words of the boy Samuel in the Old Testament captivate the heart with such humility before God:

1 Samuel 3:10 *The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."*

In the New Testament, Mary showed the same attitude. When the angel announced that she would give birth to Jesus, the Son of God, she answered:

Luke 1:38 *"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.*

Let's answer the questions:

Whom did Samuel and Mary consider their Master? _____

What word did they use to describe themselves? _____



Inverted triangle of relationships (see diagram below Fig. No 1).The triangle shown below shows how non-believers relate to the spiritual world. Maybe it describes your past life? To understand this diagram, follow these guidelines.

First of all, examine the triangle below:

Write your name in the blank line above the word "MASTER". Before becoming a Christian, a person plays the role of the master of his own life, making decisions "What is best".

Now write the word "GODS" under the word "SERVANT". Not being able to fulfill their desires themselves, unbelievers choose some god to give them power or guide them to fulfill their desires. However, their god is not their master. They do not ask, "What is your will for my life?" They consider themselves first.

Now, under the word "manipulator," write the word "mediator" or "priest".

In order to gain access to the spiritual world, an unbeliever can resort to the help of an intermediary - a spiritist, a guru or a priest. Through certain rituals or "sacrifices," these "holy people" will help a person manipulate the spiritual life. Basically, all non-Christian religions act in this way. This includes Hinduism and cults, the occult, and the New Age movement.

By controlling and appeasing spiritual forces, people are trying to gain strength and direction. However, they STILL REMAIN THE MASTERS OF THEIR OWN LIVES. Their gods are not much different from the puppets who "help" them in life.

The Christian triangle of relationships (see Fig. No 2) turns everything upside down. When we accept Christ, we affirm Him as the Lord of our lives.

Write the word "JESUS" under the word "Master" in the second triangle. If Jesus is the Master, then you and I become SERVANTS. Jesus decides "What Is Best"

Unlike the first triangle, we will add a special component to this triangle - the "Room of Communication with God".

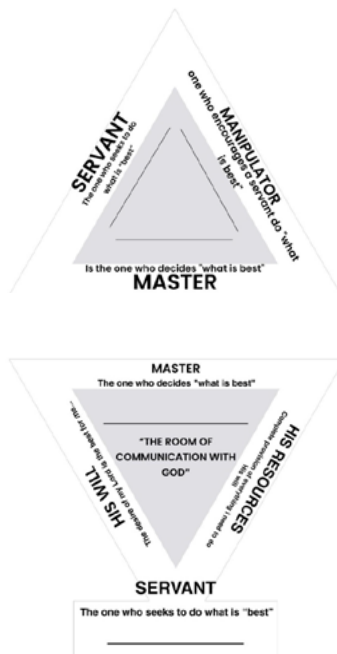
The most important function of a servant is to listen to the instructions of his Master. That is why it is very important to spend time in the "Communication Room with God," read the Bible, and listen to God's voice through, friends and preachers at church.

Unlike the first triangle, where rituals are performed to gain the favour of spiritual forces, we have a God who loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us.

Romans 8:32 *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

Now write your name on the diagram under the word "Servant."

Before we invite you to pray, I would like to say a few more words about Our Master and our position as servants toward Him. Our Lord is kind and loving, and He has proved it by His sacrifice for us. He never humiliates anyone or forces us to do something, especially something



we don't want to do. He usually gently explains the reason why He invites us to do something. As we grow in knowledge of His character, He may ask us to do things without explanation because we have learned to trust Him.

Our submission to Him is not a passive attitude of submission. He offers us His fellowship and wants to speak to us as a Father to a son or daughter.

Now, if you are willing to make Jesus your Lord, let us pray:

Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

PRAYER THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST in every area of life:

*LORD Jesus, I confess that I need You,
and I accept You now as my LORD,
my Saviour, my Redeemer and Deliverer.*

I invite You now to be the LORD of every area of my life

The LORD of my spirit—my worship, my conscience, and my spiritual understanding.

The LORD of my mind – my thoughts, my understanding and imagination, my memory and my dreams.

The LORD of my will—my desires, my intentions, and all my decisions.

The LORD of my feelings and all emotional reactions.

The LORD of my body and my physical health, of all my actions and sensations:

– my ears and everything I listen to

– my eyes, my every glance and everything I look at

– my lips and everything that goes into them, and every word that comes out of them.

– my nose everything that goes into it

The LORD of my sexuality and all its expressions.

The LORD of my finances and my material wealth.

The LORD of my time—my work, my leisure, my sleep, and my dreams.

The LORD of my relationships—my family, my marriage, my church relationships, my relationships with my friends.

The LORD of the time and the manner of my transition to You.

LORD Jesus, thank You for shedding Your blood so that I would be free and pure.

I dedicate myself to You again, my body, my soul, and my spirit.

Come, LORD Jesus, and receive what belongs to You

You rightfully belong in my life. Amen.

Week № 3. What is sin?

Day № 5. What to do with daily sins?

Let's read **Romans 10:9-10** *If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

Answer the question:

What conditions must be met for salvation? _____



If we do what God said, then we will be saved! Salvation is God's gift, we simply accept this gift by trusting God's word! It is a great joy and happiness when we realize that we have been forgiven of all our sins.

Psalm 32:1-2 *Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit.*

But what do we do when we face our sins again in our daily lives? And even if we try not to sin with all our might, we will not be able to do it. When we are faced with the struggle with our sins, we have two wrong conclusions: Because Jesus has forgiven us for all our sins, we can sin with impunity; if I continue to sin, I cannot be saved.

Both of these conclusions are not correct and both are unbiblical!

Let's look at the Bible's keys for overcoming daily sins:

The most important key to fighting sin is **confession and repentance**. **1 John 1:8-9** *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* As soon as we sin, we must confess our sin to God in prayer as quickly as possible. And accept forgiveness for the sin we have committed.

The second very important key is **the humility of the flesh**. **James 4:6** ... That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

Fasting is the refusal of food for a while, in order to seek spiritual answers. This is not just fasting for health or getting rid of excess weight. Even giving up one meal and devoting more time to prayer can be a very effective time for greater spiritual awareness.

Fasting is a God-defined tool for the humility of the flesh, and it is very effective in combating sin.

The third very important key is **sincere prayer**. *James 5:13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.*

In the moment of temptation, we can directly ask God for help to fight sin and sincerely talk to God the Father about the temptations that cause us to sin.

The fourth very important key is **to pray together and have the support of a mentor or home group**.

Galatians 6:1-2 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Sadly, many people do not use this essential tool of God and do not ask a close Christian friend to help overcome temptation or sin for fear of judgment or rejection.

And the most important thing is **the support of the Holy Spirit!**

Romans 8:26-28 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

It is necessary to learn to interact with the Holy Spirit and to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to us personally and to other members of God's family - the Church. In the future, we will talk more about how to interact with the Holy Spirit.

If we use these keys to successfully fight sin, then we will have victory over sin in our personal lives! Some sins are defeated quickly, some not so easily. But, sooner or later, we will be able to win!

One of the most important principles in the fight against personal sins is the ability to accept forgiveness from God after confessing a sin.

Acts 10:15 *The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."*

Let's talk a little about guilt and shame. When God forgives us, he completely forgets our sin. But, at the same time, there may be a feeling of guilt or shame. We must learn to accept ourselves as forgiven and cleansed in spite of these feelings. And the Word of God needs to be put above our feelings and opinions!

Psalms 102:11-14 *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.*

Week № 4. Learning to Pray

Day № 1. What is prayer?

Let's define prayer: prayer is simply a dialogue, or a conversation with God. We talk to Him - He speaks to us.

Prayer is there to develop relationships, not to form a religion! Jesus' desire to have a close relationship with us is expressed in His words:

Revelation 3:20 *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*

Dinner is a time when the whole family gathers around the table and shares their lives: events, experiences, questions, etc. This is a time of warm relations with loved ones. This is what Jesus wants, He wants to have sincere conversations with us, where we can tell Him all that we have in our hearts and share with Him our questions of life. And listen to His words of comfort, encouragement, and instruction.

Prayer is also a call to the invisible God to influence the visible world. When we pray - talk to God - we have a great desire for God to influence our earthly reality from His supernatural reality. On the pages of the Bible, we can read how God influenced nations, kings, ordinary people, widows, orphans, sick people, and the needy. No sincere prayer has ever gone unanswered, and God has manifested His power and glory in earthly reality.

"ROOM OF COMMUNICATION WITH GOD"

Let's get acquainted with this new concept. This concept is taken from the Bible verse **Matthew 6:6** (*New English Translation*) *But whenever you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.* A servant takes action only after receiving instructions from his master. As you learn to listen to God's voice, you will receive God's answers regarding your needs, the needs of others, and the specific tasks He wants to assign to you.

Some people think that God does not communicate with us directly. But this is not true! He constantly speaks to us. In order to hear God effectively, you need to introduce a "Room of Communication with God" into your life.

The "Room of Communication with God" is more of a state of the heart than a physical place. It means opening up your life not only to talk to Him, but also to listen to Him.

The prophet Habakkuk showed a similar attitude when he wrote: **Habakkuk 2:1-2** *I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint. Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.*

Since the LORD is constantly speaking to us, it would be more correct to ask, "Am I listening?" rather than "Is God speaking?"

We all learn to pray and even those who already have experience of praying to God continue to learn to talk to Him and listen to His voice. The early disciples also wanted to learn how to pray, and they asked Jesus to teach them. And He answered them,

Matthew 6:6-15 *But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

*This, then, is how you should pray: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.***

Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Let's take a look at the basic principles of prayer that Jesus teaches us:

- ❖ For prayer, it is necessary to find a place where nothing will distract us, and we will be able to concentrate our attention on God.
- ❖ In prayer to God, the sincerity of our hearts is more important, and not verbosity or the correct "spiritual words".
- ❖ Heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask Him. He knows our life!
- ❖ It is necessary to prepare our hearts so that we are in deep reverence for God. This can be expressed in worship.
- ❖ When we pray, we need to be in the position of a servant so that God's will is the most important thing for us.
- ❖ It is necessary to ask God for our daily needs and invite Him into our everyday affairs.
- ❖ It is necessary to ask God for forgiveness for our sins.
- ❖ It is necessary to forgive those who have sinned against us.
- ❖ It is necessary to ask God for protection from temptations and help in the "problem areas" of our lives.
- ❖ God gives us power over "darkness" and it is necessary to ask God for a strategy for defeating the enemy of our souls.
- ❖ It is always necessary to end the prayer with words of gratitude and praise to God!

These principles can be used to learn how to pray to God. At first, they can be used as a crib sheet in order to acquire the skill of talking to God.

After we talk to God, we need to take time to listen to His voice.

The fact that you are a Christian proves that God really does speak, and that you know how to respond to Him! You are a Christian because you have heard the voice of God calling you. You've heard His voice at least once, and possibly more!!

Day № 2. Types of prayers

In this lesson, we will learn about different types of prayer. Indeed, prayers can be different.

"Room of communication with God". We have already learned a little about this prayer in the previous lesson.

Joint prayer. This is a prayer when more than one person participates in it. For the effectiveness of this prayer, the unity of the worshippers is required, then this prayer will have a huge effect.

Matthew 18:19-20 *"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."*

Worship or singing of psalms. The book of Psalms that we read is actually a book of songs.

And the most sincere and passionate prayers are recorded in it. This type of prayer is very effective, since the whole personality of a person participates in such a prayer: spirit, soul and body.

Very often, during worship, people hear God's voice and can prophesy.

Prayer of faith for healing. Jesus used this prayer many times when praying for the sick. This prayer with confidence and faith is such that it sounds like a command to a problem: **Matthew 9:6-7** *But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home."Then the man got up and went home.*

Acts 3:6-8 *Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.*

James 5:14-16 *Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

Prayer for deliverance from an unclean spirit. This kind of prayer is a prayer of authority!

Mark 9:25 *When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again."*

Petition. This is a very important type of prayer of intercession for people.

Ezekiel 22:30 *"I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.*



God wants us to intercede for the land we live in. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 *I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*

Prayer by the Spirit. This is a type of prayer that is carried out through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We will talk about this type of prayer in more detail later.

Romans 8:26 *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.*

WHERE IS CHRIST WHEN HE COMMUNICATES WITH US?

Christ does not speak to us from heaven, from afar, when we hear His voice. He speaks directly from you. Of course, this statement only applies to those who have repented of sin and accepted Jesus into their hearts! The Apostle Paul says that this is the "great secret" or "mystery" of the Good News: *"Christ is in you, the hope of glory"* **Colossians 1:27. Jesus has taken up residence in our hearts!**

God does not live in a building, He lives in us! When we communicate with Christ, He is within us, in our "inner man."

Ephesians 3:16-17 *I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

Where does the strengthening Spirit of God work according to this verse?



You can pray – talk to God at any time, as His Spirit is always in your inner man!

SPECIAL ASSISTANT

To help us deepen our relationship with Him, Jesus gives us a special helper – the Holy Spirit!

Below you will read the promises that Jesus made to His disciples before His death:

John 14:16-18 *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever — he Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*

John 16:7 *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*

John 16:12-14 *“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

Week № 4. Learning to Pray

Day № 3. The Secret of Answered Prayer

John 16:24 *Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.*

The most important secret of answered prayer is knowing and obeying God's will. It is God's will that we do all things in Jesus' Name and for His glory.

When our heart is focused on glorifying Jesus Christ, it is in the right position before God and all our prayers will have an answer!

John 8:28-29 *So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, **for I always do what pleases him.**"*



Jesus reveals to us the central secret of answered prayer.

What do you think is this secret? _____

When prayer is done according to God's will, it will always have the desired effect.

Let's see how Jesus prays for one of his friends - Lazarus, who died!

John 11:41-44 *So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."*

Answer a few questions:

Why was Jesus confident that the Father would hear Him? _____

What did He do when He began to pray? _____

What was the result of prayer? _____



So, the most important key to effective prayer is to be able to hear God's voice and obey what God says!

It is also very important to be able to apply what we hear from God. God can give us visions, dreams, promptings to do something, it can be a growing feeling of the need to talk to someone about Jesus Christ, etc. It is very important to take the risk of doing what we hear from God. God always speaks often to people who obey Him!

LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT

Let's talk about how to listen to the Holy Spirit! Because it is extremely important for effective prayer.

In order to hear the voice of God's Spirit, we need to learn to listen in a new way, very attentively. In the past, your thoughts just flew out of your head. However, thoughts from the Spirit have nothing to do with our thinking process. They come from God's Spirit in our "inner man." This does not mean that we should be "thoughtless." God renews our minds with His Word and uses it. And yet, in order to learn to hear God, we need to calm the whirlwind of our thoughts. This will help us to inwardly perceive the promptings of the Spirit.

How can we distinguish the voice of God's Spirit from our own thoughts? Here are some practical suggestions: The most important thing about being able to hear the voice of the Spirit is to come to God with the heart of a servant. Willing to do what He tells you to do. Even if what you hear will go beyond your experience or logic!

God always wants to be number one. For this, complete concentration on Him is necessary. You won't be able to hear something important "in between". You can't put God on our schedule. It is we who must tune in to His order! To tune our minds to "God's frequency," we can start by reading the book of Psalms. The Psalms are written for our edification to develop the skill of deep personal communication with God. Then you can move on to singing psalms. Start listening to and singing psalms and spiritual songs.

When the Holy Spirit begins to speak to you, it will be different from thoughts simply coming out of your mind as you think. The thoughts that the Spirit of Christ has suggested to your spirit are spontaneous ideas, words, feelings, and images. They will be different from

your usual way of thinking. They seem to come from the outside and do not come simply from logic. You will feel that thoughts come "from the heart" and not "from the head".

The thoughts of the Spirit will sometimes be unusual in content. They may carry ideas, images, or directions that you would never have thought of on your own. They will bring with them a sense of peace and spiritual strength. These thoughts will never contradict Scripture. But they can go beyond your understanding of the Scriptures. Such revelations can be shared with more spiritually experienced believers.

When you act according to the promptings of the Spirit, it will bring you joy and freedom.

Please give your assessment of the following statements. This will help you to understand how ignorant you have been about the existence of the spiritual realm, and have relied only on your own mind.



In the past, the only real reality for me was the physical world, not the physical and spiritual world combined

Yes ☐ No ☐ ; I don't know ☐ Other _____

I make decisions only by relying on my reason, I don't wait for God to put His thoughts and His vision into me.

Yes ☐ No ☐ ; I don't know ☐ Other _____

I preferred to analyze, not allowing God to put His thoughts into my heart.

Yes ☐ No ☐ ; I don't know ☐ Other _____

I comprehend the Bible with my mind rather than allow God to reveal certain truths to me by His Spirit

Yes ☐ No ☐ ; I don't know ☐ Other _____

Week № 4. Learning to Pray

Day № 4. Chamber of Secrets—A Personal Relationship with God

Jeremiah 9:23-24 *This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.*

Hosea 6:6 *For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.*

What do you think God wants most? _____

So, in this lesson, we will talk about how to build a personal relationship with God

In order to build a personal relationship with God, it is necessary to consider several fundamental truths:

- ❖ God wants to be with us more than we want to be with Him (**Romans 5:8**)
- ❖ He found us, not that we found Him (**John 15:16**)
- ❖ He waits for us every day to fellowship with Him (**Luke 15:20**)
- ❖ He wants to have sincere conversations with us (**Psalms 17:26,27; Matthew 6:7,8**)
- ❖ He wants to comfort us and answer us (**Psalms 36:4; 2 Corinthians 1:3,4**)
- ❖ He is available at any time and is always happy to meet us (**John 16:24**)
- ❖ Nothing can separate us from Him (**Romans 8:38,39**)

On His relationship towards us, we can boldly build a relationship with Him, knowing that He has paid the highest price to be with us - His Life! And He didn't just pay for us and die - He was resurrected, and we speak to the eternally living God!

Psalms 2:12 *Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*



God longs to be with us and speaks about it many times in the pages of Scripture!

Therefore, the Chamber of Secrets should be treated as a date with your Beloved! This is not just a prayer for the country, for the church, for deeds, etc. This is a time when we can be together with our Beloved God. Therefore, in the Chamber of Secrets, we can develop a "first love" relationship, because this is exactly what our God wants!

Revelation 2:2-5 *I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.*

One of the main rules of the Chamber of Secrets is: We talk about Him, about ourselves and about us!

A few tips for organizing personal time with God - "Chamber of Secrets"

- ❖ Be sure to set aside time every day for a personal conversation with God (even if it is only 10 minutes). In the future you yourself will not notice how this time increases.
- ❖ Choose a place that is convenient for you where you can be alone with God (walking, cleaning, bathroom, garden, basement, etc.)
- ❖ Close all "doors" so that you will fully concentrate on your relationship with God. One of the most important doors of our time is the mobile phone. Leave it at home or turn off the calls. It can also be very difficult to stop the flow of thoughts and worries about affairs and problems. In order to stop the flow of thoughts, learn not to run away from them, but to tell God about your worries, and have a notebook with you to write down important things and put them aside.
- ❖ Learn to pour out your emotions to God and tell Him about fears, anger, pain, sadness, etc.
- ❖ Use praise and worship. You can use headphones or an audio system, guitar or piano. Sing to God!
- ❖ Keep a journal and write down everything you hear from God in the Chamber of Secrets
- ❖ Use the Scriptures, read the Bible during the Chamber of Secrets, especially the book of Psalms.
- ❖ Don't expect every Chamber of Secrets to be a success. Sometimes you will feel as if time is being wasted. But, this is not true!! The Father will surely reward you for your efforts to find Him.
- ❖ Know that the devil is most afraid of your intimacy with God, so don't be embarrassed when you feel resistance.
- ❖ Learn to win your time with God!

- ❖ Ask God "Hard Questions" and talk to Him about what you don't understand about Him! He will definitely answer.
- ❖ Complain and weep before Him. Receive comfort from Jesus. He understands you for sure, because He experienced all the sorrows of life on earth and won.

Even if you haven't been to the Chamber of Secrets for a very long time, still go to meet God. He is still faithful and waiting for you. Just start your prayer with repentance and continue the conversation with God without feeling guilty, He knows that it is difficult for you!

- ❖ Memorize important scriptures and recite them in prayer to destroy the enemy's lies.

In the next lesson, we will talk about how to apply the Bible in the Chamber of Secrets.

Now go to the Chamber of Secrets and talk to the most loving Person in the universe! He's waiting for you!

Week № 4. Learning to Pray

Day № 5. The Word of God. How to Read the Bible? How to Apply the Bible in Prayer?

Often, our prayers are God's search for answers to our questions in life.

Starting from our daily needs and ending with the meaning of life. Everything that is necessary for people's lives is written on the pages of Scripture, where God has already written His answers to many of our questions in advance.

The Bible teaches us not only about spiritual relationships, but also about emotional development, and development in the field of people's relationships with each other (personal, sexual, professional, etc.).

The Bible is the most practical book on earth! Reading it, we read the Father's Letter to people, we can recognize His character, His attitude to various actions and see His decisions in various situations. We get to know His person and His heart.

When we speak to God in our "secret chamber," the Holy Spirit who communicates with us will often use His Word to "bring it to life" for us personally. It is very important to test what we hear with the Word of God. The Holy Spirit will never say anything that is contrary to Scripture! He will not contradict Himself!

John 10:4-5 *When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."*

That is why it is important for us to read the Scriptures. We get used to the way the Father speaks, how He acts in different situations, and it is easier for us to recognize His guidance in our lives.

Helpful tip: Memorize key scriptures. It is much easier for God to speak to us when we know and meditate on Scripture well.

One of the best ways to meditate on God's Word is to ask questions about the text.

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions:

- ❖ Who is the author of the passage, and-whom is he addressing?
- ❖ What does the verse say, and why?
- ❖ What does this mean?
- ❖ Does the verse contain a spiritual principle or law?
- ❖ How can this truth be applied to my life?
- ❖ What have I learned about the Personality of the Godhead?
- ❖ What did I learn about myself?

The Bible is the Word of God (we talked about this in Week 2 Day 2) and this Word is addressed to us personally!

2 Timothy 3:15-17 *and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

So, the Bible is written by the Holy Spirit, who has inspired people for many centuries to write what He wanted to reveal to mankind. Let us repeat once again: His letter is a letter to us personally!

In order to effectively delve into the Scriptures, it is necessary to take into account the historical context, literary context and use different translations.

Historical context: God has always had a reason to express His Word, whether it be events, the life of a person or an entire nation. We see in the Bible God's assessment of what is happening on earth: His approval or judgment, prediction of the future or consequences related to the condition and lives of people. By finding out this reason, we can determine what and how God reacts to it. It is possible to find to whom, when, where, and why God addresses His Word.

Literary context: Every phrase, sentence, or verse in the Bible is thematically related to the preceding and subsequent verses or text. If, for example, you are trying to understand what Jesus Christ said to his disciples in a verse, define the boundaries of the text that describes the entire conversation and its topic. Try to follow the author's point in this passage and answer the question, "What is the point?" When interpreting, do not take a single verse out of the context of the description of a given topic, conversation, statement or events. This will help you make your search more correct.

OUR GOAL IS TO FIND OUT:

What the Word of God says to those people at that time and place.

What God's Word is telling us now.

Various translations:

It may be helpful to read various different translations of the Bible from time to time, as this can help to keep the Word fresh and new for us.

The Word of God is the Bread of Life! And it is necessary to feed on it daily.



Matthew 4:3-4 *The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

The Word of God is food for our inner man. Regular dwelling in the Word of God is the key to spiritual health, strength, and wisdom. Get into the habit of being in God's Word every day!

Read and reflect on it, compare your life, and discuss everything that needs to be changed with the Father.

The piano tuner uses a tuning fork to tune to the exact harmonious sound. The tuning fork has a certain pitch, which always remains unchanged. The master will not be able to tune the instrument by listening only to the strings. If he had done so, the piano would have gradually become out of tune and the sound would not have been harmonious. It needs an external stable standard.

The Bible, the Word of God, plays the same role in our lives. The Spirit of God, through the pages of Scripture, offers a stable standard and attunes our heart to the same wavelength with God!

Week № 5. The Main Commandment in Life

Day № 1. Who is God?

This week we will talk about the main commandment in human life, which the LORD left us!

Matthew 22:36-38 *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.”*

It is interesting that God left us the main commandment of this content. In another way, we can say: **"Fall in love with Me"**

Many people think that Christianity is a set of laws and rules. **But God says it's a relationship of love!**

On the one hand, this is not a difficult commandment, but on the other hand, people often lose their focus on this commandment and slide into fulfilling the precepts and rules. Here is what the Holy Spirit says about the actions and deeds of believers without love for God:

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *(New English Translation) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but I do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I give over my body in order to boast, but do not have love, I receive no benefit.*

So how do we fulfill this first commandment to love the LORD?

We can't just command our hearts to love the LORD. Falling in love is much more than just making a decision. Moreover, it is written in the commandment to love God both with heart and soul. This includes awareness of His beauty, emotional response, and admiration for Him.

How to love Him if you do not know Him intimately?

Therefore, the first step to fulfilling this commandment is to try to meet Him and get to know Him. Put all your strength into this search, and He will definitely allow Himself to be found and get to know Us!

Let's see what God says through the prophet Jeremiah about this:

Jeremiah 29:11-14 *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."*

And I will be found by you, says the LORD...

By reading the Bible, we can learn a lot about what God says about Himself, and we can learn a lot about Him by looking at His reactions to certain actions of people.

God speaks through the stories of His dealings with people. The whole story is His story!

God also speaks to us about Himself through His creation:

Romans 1:19-20 *since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*

Psalms 19:1-4 *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.*

In order to love God, it is necessary to find out who He is and what He loves. And then take the risk of applying it to your life and see where it leads. Through such experiences, knowledge of God becomes our personal experience, and this is what affects intimacy with Him.

For example : we have learned that God can and wants to heal us. Until this knowledge is ours, it does not cause us deep emotions. But when we personally experience God's healing and His care for us, it will change our relationship with Him forever.

John 4:47-48 *When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."*

1 Corinthians 2:4-5 *My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.*

God does not want to be just a spiritual theory or religion for us, He wants to manifest Himself in our lives!

A member of our church shared his testimony of his experience with God. He and his wife both accepted Jesus as their Saviour. The only difference was that the wife rejoiced and worshipped God with all her heart both at home and in church. And the husband could not understand all these "emotional manifestations." He did not like to sing and did not experience anything while worshipping God. And they were both very happy about the appearance of their child. Once it so happened that the wife had to leave, and the husband was left alone with the baby. At that moment, the baby turned red and had a high fever. Father panicked. He didn't know what to do! And the child did not stop crying and screaming. At that moment, he remembered the word about God, that He was the Healer, which he had heard at the house church. And he ventured to pray for the healing of his child. He said the words of the prayer: "*In the Name of Jesus Christ, be healed!*" After a few moments, the child stopped crying, and his skin became a normal pink colour and the temperature decreased.

The child's father realized that God had healed his child at the moment of prayer. He burst into tears, repented and began to sing and dance. At that moment, his wife returned and found her husband worshipping God! Now the husband was able to understand all those emotions. He personally met God and recognized Him as Healer.

Week № 5. The Main Commandment in Life

Day № 2. Names of God

The Bible says that our faith depends on what we have heard about God.

Romans 10:17 *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.*

If it is so important to hear what the Bible says about God, then let's look at the Names of God.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT NAMES OF GOD, AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Each of God's Names describes a different aspect of His multifaceted disposition. The main Name of God, which He revealed personally to Moses:

1. JEHOVAH (YHWH) (translated LORD in English Bibles): **"I AM WHO I AM."** He who is, who is self-existent, who has life in himself. (*Exodus 3:14; John 5:26*) *Exodus 34:5-7 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."*

2. JEHOVAH-JIREH: "The LORD will provide" (provide, supply the need) (*Genesis 22:14; Phil 4:19*)

3. JEHOVAH-RAPHA: "The LORD is our Healer" (*Exodus 15:26; 1 Peter 2:24*)

4. JEHOVAH-NISSI: "The LORD is our banner" (*Exodus 17:15; 1 Corinthians 15:57*)

5. JEHOVAH-KADOSH: "The LORD sanctifies, cleanses" (*Exodus 31:13; Hebrews 10:10*)

6. JEHOVAH-SHALOM: "The LORD our peace" (*Judges 6:24; John 14:27*)

7. JEHOVAH-TZIDKENU: "Our LORD is righteousness, justification" (*Jeremiah 33:16; Corinthians 5:21*)

8. JEHOVAH-ROHI: "The LORD is my Shepherd" (*Psalms 22:1; John 10:14*)

9. JEHOVAH-SHAMMA: "The LORD is there/present" (*Ezekiel 48:35; Matthew 28:20*)

10. JEHOVAH SABAOOTH: "LORD of hosts" (*Isaiah 1:24; James 5:4*)

11. JEHOVAH-GEMMULA: "The LORD who repays" (*Jeremiah 51:56; Romans 12:19*)

12. ADONAI: "The Lord" (*Psalms 96:5; Matthew 22:45*)

13. ELOHIM: "God the Creator" plural form of Eloah, which affirms the doctrine of the Trinity (*Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16*)

14. EL ELYON: "The Most High God" (*Genesis 14:18; Ephesians 1:20-22*)

15. EL-ROI: "God is all-seeing" (*Genesis 16:13; Psalm 138:12; John 1:48*)

16. EL-SHADDAI "God is Abundant", "God Almighty", literally: "many-breasted" (*Gen. 24:35; Romans 10:12*)

This is an incomplete list of the Names of God that He Himself has revealed to people over the centuries! All these Names of God (His divine attributes) are described in the Old Testament and they are manifested in Christ Jesus!

And now let's get acquainted with the Name that only **the Son of God could reveal**, and through this Name of God we have all become His beloved children—This Name is "FATHER"

John 17:25-26 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

God is first of all a Person who created us in His image and likeness. And we are like Him. Let's see what His *reveals to us* about His Emotions.

- ❖ God loves (*Exodus 34:6*)
- ❖ God has compassion (*James 5:11*)
- ❖ God is long-suffering (*2 Peter 3:9*)
- ❖ God laughs (*Psalm 2:4 He who dwells in heaven will laugh*)
- ❖ God is angry (*Deuteronomy 9:8*)
- ❖ God is irritated (*Deuteronomy 9:7*)
- ❖ God is grieving (*Genesis 6:6*)
- ❖ God repents (regrets) (*Genesis 6:6*)
- ❖ God is jealous (*Exodus 34:14*)
- ❖ God hates (*Jeremiah 44:4*)

Of course, God as a Person has His own characteristics that are unique to Him, and He wants to reveal Himself to us.

Sometimes people cannot approach Him because they do not perceive God in the "truth." They have their own image of God and try to interact with this image. But God wants us to talk to Him on the basis of what He Himself has told us about Himself.

Let us look at Job's words after He met the Person of the Godhead.

Job 42:1-6 *Then Job replied to the LORD: "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. "You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."*

Prayer:

LORD, I realize that behind the Name there is always a Personality, an essence, an expressed content. You are welcome. LORD, quicken to me everything about Your Name, Your character, Your ways, Your dreams and desires, Your essence, so that I may know You and love You. I renounce my lies about You, which do not correspond to Your Word and what You have said about Yourself! Amen

Week № 5. The Main Commandment in Life

Day № 3. God's retribution! Grace and law.

Let's read the verse again about the things without which it is impossible to please God!

Hebrews 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

We have already become acquainted with the law of faith. Faith comes from what we hear about God!

One of the extended Bible translations says of **Hebrews 11:6**: *Without faith it is impossible to please God. He who comes to God must believe what God has said about Himself, and then God rewards those who seek and agree with Him!* Sometimes we can meet people who believe in their idea of God, and not in what He says about Himself. **Rejecting God as He is, we experience rejection!**

For example: The true God calls Himself the God of Israel (the God of the Jews). It was He who created this people. Jesus was a Jew by His mother. And He said this about His people:

Genesis 12:1-3 *The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

If you have ever slandered the Jews (curses, jokes, anecdotes) - you have cursed their Creator and laughed at His choice! And for this we must repent before Him.

So, faith in God must be based on what God says about Himself! This is humility! And God gives grace to the humble! And he resists the proud.

James 4:6-10 *But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the LORD, and he will lift you up.*

If your view of God does not correspond to what God said about Himself, then there is only one thing to do, and that is to repent and correct the divided heart and accept the truth about God. And then you will have access to GRACE!

GRACE is the most powerful word in the universe. It is the knowledge of God's kindness, benevolence, care and love for us, even with our wrong attitudes towards Him, that can forever captivate our hearts, and we can fall in love with Him!

GRACE AND LAW. In order to know God even more, let's get acquainted with the concepts of Grace and Law!

Both of these concepts came from God, but they came at different times and for different purposes pursued by a good God! God gave the law to one of His faithful servants, Moses. In short, the Law is written in the 10 commandments.

Read **Exodus 20:1-17** What was the purpose of the Law? And can man keep these commandments?



Answer the questions:

Have you ever broken any of these commandments? Yes ☐ ; No ☐ ; Difficult to answer ☐

What awaits those who violate the Law of God? _____

Why did God give us the Law, if no man can fulfill it and yet the punishment for breaking it is death? _____

And how can we love such a strict God? _____

Let's see how the Bible answers these questions?

Romans 3:19-20 *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.*

The law is the spiritual mirror of our condition! Can a mirror correct a person or does it just show his condition? Of course, a mirror simply tells the truth about our condition. But what to do with our condition?

Read **Romans 3:21-31** Grace is a word that means we get what we don't deserve when we are guilty.

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Grace is "undeserved favour." You will not find this concept in any of the religious systems. Only the Bible says that a loving God is ready and willing to forgive us for our selfish, rebellious way of life and live in us. This is the Good News! And although all this sounds great, it

is difficult for us to believe that the God who gave the strict Law is also the Most Loving Person, ready to accept us regardless of our inconsistency with the provisions of the Law! But it is His will revealed in Christ Jesus and we just need to trust it!

Grace does not come easily to us, we are not endowed with a "natural ability" to receive it. We begin to feel grace in the school of God's law. We are confronted with the law when we realize our inability to live up to His standards, and we recognize the need for His grace, when we have experienced the consequences of deviating from His standard.

We must see our weakness, understand that on our own we will not be able to achieve the life we dream of. After that, the law of God, having endowed us with the power of grace, will guide us. Bible principles will be a lamp that lights our way, and we will love God by realizing the depth of His good heart!

Week № 5. The Main Commandment in Life

Day № 4. Who do we worship?



In this class we continue to talk about how we can love our Lord! In particular, we will talk about worship of the Lord, which is a form of loving relationship with our Beloved. And in this matter we will again need Grace. Grace also gives us the strength and desire to do things that are not natural for a person in a "fallen state" to do.

Loving the Lord is an act of grace! For a person in a rebellious and selfish state, it is inconceivable to love Someone who wants to dominate their lives. But it is grace that gives us the desire and the strength and the understanding that worship and love of God is a treasure, and grace draws us to Him!

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

We seek God because He seeks us. Let this fact serve as our support. We seek Him means that He seeks us. And He has given us the verse to prove it: "No man can come to Me except the Father draws him" (John 6:44). **When we seek Him, it is a sign that He is looking for us!**

God not only begins this process in us by drawing us to Himself, but also pushes us along the path of spiritual growth until its very completion.

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.



Examine your view of God: Do you think He is for you or against you? _____

How do you perceive God - as a Friend or as an enemy? _____

Where do you get "undeserved favour"? _____

This love for God and the ability to worship Him is given by the Holy Spirit. We also receive the Holy Spirit by grace through faith! It is the Holy Spirit that pours out all these supernatural abilities into us.

Romans 5:5 *And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

The Holy Spirit comes into people and gives Faith, Hope and Love from within. It is He who gives us the experience of righteousness! When He (the Holy Spirit) comes upon us, we can experience a range of experiences, from being convicted of sins (thereby preparing our hearts for worship) to experiencing absolute purity and freedom in God's presence.

This joy from the realization of grace can reach levels that have never been known to man.

At this time, God can "saturate" all corners of our being and fill us with His love. And this will inevitably lead us to the deepest love for Him.

Worshipping God under the influence of the Holy Spirit can edify us!

Ephesians 5:18-19 *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.*

What does the word "edify" mean? This word has a lot of meanings. Let's list them: teach, teach, teach, give spiritual and moral instructions, build or create, charge (like a battery), pickle or salt.

Colossians 3:16 *Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.*

Thus, the work of the Holy Spirit in us can lead us to worship, worship in turn can lead us to edification and a deep awareness of God's truths within our hearts and love for the Lord.

John 4:23-24 *Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."*

Sometimes these experiences are so strong that a person feels so good that people can experience "Paradise" on earth. Also, various supernatural phenomena can occur during this time, such as: healing, prophecy, visions and revelations, God's personal touch, the appearance of angels, miracles and signs, speaking in tongues.

To cope with such a range of experiences, there is a very important tool given to us by God - the Fear of the LORD! It is the Fear of the LORD that is the most important manifestation of grace to balance our lives.

Week № 5. The Main Commandment in Life

Day № 5. The Fear of the LORD

In this lesson, we will get acquainted with the most important concept of the Christian life - the Fear of the LORD. The love of God sets you free from legalism, and the fear of God sets you free from iniquity!

Let's see why we are given the fear of the LORD.

1. The fear of the LORD appeared after the Fall

Adam and Eve enjoyed God. He was the closest Person. There was no threat or doubt in God's love. There was a feeling of complete security. *"Both Adam and his wife were naked, but they were not ashamed."* (Gen. 2:25) Everything was in its place, God was LORD and Father and the most loving Person in the universe.

2. This is not the fear of punishment

Genesis 3:1-10 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' " "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

God was the Most Loving Person a moment ago, but now it is the Person who threatens us after the Fall!

God remained what He was, Father, Lord, and Love. But there has been a change in our nature. We have lost the truth about God and His glory and the ability to have a pure relationship. Self-focus has destroyed the ability to build relationships of love! But He hasn't changed! Jesus is proof that He has not changed! He is still Lord, Father and Love! And that outside of Him there is no life for us!

3. After we have doubted Him, we need a reminder that He is who He is! Because of the sin within us, when we meet God, we have feelings of inadequacy and mortal terror! And this is good. It's just an awareness of your death situation! And this realization humbles us and leads us to the Saviour.
4. The fear of God is the recognition of who we are in relation to Him. We are dependent on Him (Psalm 90)
5. The fear of God is the realization that He is Holy (*Isaiah 6:1-7*) Not like any human being! He is the Creator, and we are the creation.
6. **The fear of God gives us the realization that God is greater and stronger than we are.** In a sinful state, we need to know this, but not in order to intimidate us, but in order to bring us back! Pay attention to Him (as we are busy with ourselves)

Deuteronomy 5:22-29 *These are the commandments the LORD proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was ablaze with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. And you said, "The LORD our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks with them. But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer. For what mortal has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and survived? Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. We will listen and obey." The LORD heard you when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, "I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!*

7. The world does not revolve around man, the world revolves around God. He is the Centre of the universe.
8. In the fear of God there is hope and life.

Proverbs 14:26-27 *Whoever fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.*

9. **We can enjoy the fear of God, that is, the right position of God in our hearts. It gives us security and life.**

Proverbs 19:23 *The fear of the LORD leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble.*

Proverbs 22:4 *Humility is the fear of the LORD; its wages are riches and honour and life.*

10. **This is a healthy and useful fear, and we need it for Victory over the sinful part of our nature.**

11. The law is not given to those who know God personally, but to the lawless. And for those who have gone astray. So that they realize who God is, who we are, and accept Him as He is! The law leads to the fear of God!

1 Timothy 1:8-11 *We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.*

SO: The fear of the LORD is a manifestation of God's grace to bless our lives!

Week № 6. The Believer's Authority

Day № 1. Spiritual Authority.

God is our loving Father, He has made us His children and has given us everything we need to live a successful and victorious life with Him.

John 1:12-13 (RSV) *But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

How do the concepts of being a child of God and the concept of authority combine in themselves? It would be much clearer and more natural to say, "He gave me the joy of becoming God's children" or "He gave me the happiness of becoming God's children." But the word used here is power, which in this context means the authority or right to act.

Let's define the word authority:

Authority is the right to order, induce, subordinate to one's will, the right to use force. The best way to understand the concept of authority is by a simple example: Boxers, within the ring, have the right to use force (according to the rules of boxing). Outside the ring, they have no authority or right to use their power. If this happens and they use their power outside the ring, then they will face the authority of the country and be punished. In order to better understand this question, let's look at how everything was originally created by God.

When God created the first humans, Adam and Eve, He gave them authority over everything that was created on earth.

Genesis 1:26-28 *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

Man was created to be the representative of God the Creator on earth. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve were in obedience to the Creator, and God gave them spiritual and physical authority on earth to govern. Adam and Eve were the first king and queen on Earth.

There is a very important spiritual law described in the Bible. This is the law of power and obedience.



Romans 6:16 *Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?*

Whom we obey has power over us! At creation, man was given the commandment:

Genesis 2:16-17 *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

At the moment of temptation, Satan said another word to Eve

Genesis 3:4-5 *"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

Man had a choice: To listen to God and not eat the fruit, or to listen to Satan and eat the fruit. Adam and Eve made their choice by listening to Satan's word and eating the fruit. Immediately the spiritual law of obedience and authority came into force, and man lost the authority that he had received from God. Man voluntarily gave his authority to Satan, and the devil received lawful authority over the whole earth.

Luke 4:5-8 *The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the Kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"*

This scripture makes it clear that the devil has lawful authority that man has given him, and he offers that authority to Jesus on the condition that He disobey his Father. But Jesus remains in complete obedience to His Father and thereby retains His authority over the earth that Adam and Eve lost.

Philippians 2:6-11 *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.*

Thus, Jesus became the only person on earth who retained complete obedience to God the Father. And as a result of this, the spiritual law of obedience and authority worked (whoever we obey, has authority over us). God never lost His sovereignty over the entire universe, so He didn't need to give it back! He gave authority to Adam and Eve, but they lost it when they sinned and gave it to Satan. That's why after the Fall, *"The whole world is under the control of the evil one"* (1 John 5:19). However, Jesus never sinned, so He could say, *"Satan has no hold on me"* (Jn 14:30).

Matthew 28:18 *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*

There is One over all Earth and Heaven who has complete power and authority - His Name is Jesus!

Week № 6. The Believer's Authority

Day № 2. Spiritual world. The Kingdom of God

Read **Luke 17:20-21** Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the Kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is in your midst."

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM?

A Kingdom is the rule of a king who has his subordinates: servants, soldiers and other subjects. This concept is directly related to power. Neither on Earth nor in heaven are there beings who do not belong to a Kingdom. On Earth, we are subject to the laws of the state in which we live. The state always has a ruler, whether it is a president, a king or a tsar. The spirit world also has a king. And the Bible is clear about the Kingdom of heaven and the rule of a King who has authority over the spirit world and the entire earth.

We may think that we are our own masters. But all people are necessarily subordinate to someone.

THE BIBLE TELLS US ABOUT THREE HEAVENS

The first heaven is the place where a person lives. This is the planet Earth and the earth's atmosphere (*Genesis 1*). The first heaven is influenced by two Kingdoms: God's and Satan's. In the Luke 17 we read that the Kingdom of God works in a subtle way, not by earthly standards (government, army, servants), but within man, in his mind (thoughts), will, emotions, and spirit.

The second heaven is the place where Satan and his servants (demons) live. The Bible calls this place the heavens. This is the spiritual space between planet Earth and the third heaven. (Ephesians 2:1-2; Ephesians 6:12). It is a spiritual space where everything is opposed to God's rule and God's order. Satan rules from here, influencing people who are "obedient" to him. Here Satan's strategy and plans are worked out: sin, temptation, warriors, death, etc.

The third heaven is the place where God dwells and all the angels and people who obey Him. This is where the angels act, here the salvation of people is decided, here are the answers to prayers, here all God's miracles and signs are



sanctioned. After our earthly life, we will come here. Here everyone has a home, here we will spend eternity. (2 Corinthians 12:2-4; John 14:1-3)

YOU ARE A CITIZEN OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM!

Every person on earth is a citizen of some earthly state. He obeys the laws, pays taxes, has his own rights and obligations. At the same time, every person on planet Earth has spiritual citizenship: either he is a subject of the Heavenly Kingdom, or of Satan. The Bible tells us very clearly (*Ephesians 2:1-10*): if a person has not accepted heavenly citizenship through Jesus Christ, he automatically becomes a subject of the second heaven.

We have all lived under the power of Satan. He imposed on us moral values, habits, and the manner of behaving. But it is very important to accept the Good News: You are a citizen of the Heavenly Kingdom! Jesus will reveal to you new moral values, habits, and manners! Our spiritual citizenship is imprinted within us! (*Ephesians 1:13-14*)

Live as a citizen of God's Kingdom because through you Jesus will exercise His authority and power to affect your life, your relatives, your city, your country.

God exercises His authority on earth through people who have become obedient to Him and through angels. Eventually, He Himself will return and completely change the entire present order. The Second Heaven will disappear and the reign of Jesus Christ will extend to everything!

And what will happen to the Earth?

2 Peter 3:10-13 *But the day of the LORD will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.*

Now, let's answer a few questions.



What is your citizenship? _____

What did you get when you accepted Jesus into your life _____

Through whom does God exercise his rule on earth? _____

Luke 17:20-21 *Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the Kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is in your midst."*

Week № 6. The Believer's Authority

Day № 3. Power diagram. We can do anything.

Let us consider the distribution of spiritual power during the four epochs of earthly history:



1. Before the Fall, power was exercised in the following way:
 - ❖ God is above all
 - ❖ Man with authority over the whole earth (Genesis 1:28)
2. After the Fall:
 - ❖ God is in the heavens, above all things
 - ❖ Satan is over man and earth (Luke 4:6; Romans 6:16)
3. Jesus' earthly life:
 - ❖ God the Father is in heaven and Jesus on earth is over all things (Luke 4:36; John 16:11)

- ❖ Satan is over man and earth
4. After Jesus' ascension:
- ❖ God the Father and Jesus in Heaven - Above All
 - ❖ Christians have power over Satan, demons and their works
 - ❖ Satan is over the earth and unsaved people (Matthew 28:18-20)

Luke 10:17-20 *The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "LORD, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

After Jesus gave His disciples authority, that authority was manifested on earth, and the disciples and others saw it! That is why Jesus says that those who received Him were given the power to be the children of God. God restored spiritual authority over the earth to those who became obedient to God and accepted His Son into their lives.

This diagram shows God's order. He who has more power is higher and he has the right to command and rule, and he who has less power is lower and he must obey and carry out the orders or instructions of the one who stands above him.

Jesus states many times that if we believe in God's promise and His authority that He has given us, then all things are possible!

Mark 9:23 *"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes."*

Mark 11:22-24 *"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."*

Believers sometimes find it difficult to believe what is said in these verses. But there is no allegorical meaning here. Jesus has restored the dominion of the earth to those who believe in Him, and He promises that if we believe it, we will succeed! An important criterion in the exercise of spiritual authority on earth is conformity to God's plans in the exercise of that authority.

Matthew 6:10 *your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

If we know God's will, we can boldly exercise spiritual authority!

Let's answer the questions:

Can we command the diseases to go away?

Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐

Can we command demons to cease their influence?

Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐

Can we command weather conditions?

Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐

Can we use spiritual authority to our advantage?

Yes ☐; No ☐; I don't know ☐



Week № 6. The Believer's Authority

Day № 4. Spiritual Counterfeits

Knowing his fate, Satan will certainly try to prevent Christians from exercising spiritual authority and limiting his influence on earth. To do this, he usually uses lies and deception. If he manages to deceive people about what Jesus Christ has done, then he exercises power over them.

Do you remember the rule of power: whom you obey, you are slaves?

If people don't listen to what God says, they listen to what Satan says.

John 8:43-45 (New English Translation) *Why don't you understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot accept my teaching. You people are from your father the devil, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I am telling you the truth, you do not believe me.*



What name does Jesus give to Satan? _____

Can Satan speak the truth? _____

What can prevent the use of spiritual authority? _____

Since Satan cannot lie to believing Christians about who Jesus is, he usually lies to them about what they can do while they are "in Christ." He is lying to them about the positions of authority that the LORD has given us! He may also exhibit false signs and wonders that may confuse Christians about God's sovereignty.

Let's look in the Bible at the "spiritual counterfeits" that Satan performed.

Exodus 7:10-12 *So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts: Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.*

Acts 8:9-12 *Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is rightly called the Great Power of God." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*

Acts 16:16-18 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

All of the above Scriptures tell us about supernatural phenomena. These are not just some "tricks", these are real supernatural phenomena. But in all these situations, both God and Satan were at work. And these phenomena were similar. But, some of them were fakes, others were real miracles from God. We need not be surprised that phenomena that are not "natural" can come from the spiritual world. We must accept that God gives us supernatural opportunities to learn how to distinguish between God's miracles and "spiritual counterfeits." As we walk with God, we will have more experience using what Jesus has given us.

Let's practice our spiritual discernment. And we will answer a few questions:

From what heavens can supernatural phenomena come? From the first ☐ From the second ☐ From the third ☐

;

Can all supernatural phenomena be from God? Yes ☐ No ☐ Difficult to answer ☐

Will Satan Use Spiritual Counterfeits? Yes ☐ No ☐ Difficult to answer ☐



Now let's turn to the Bible and see if God warns us about spiritual counterfeits:

Matthew 24:24-25 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you ahead of time.

1 John 4:1-4 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

Dear friends, we should not be embarrassed or afraid of the supernatural, because our God promises us victory and He gives us all the tools so that we can confidently use His power and authority!

Week № 6. The Believer's Authority

Day № 5. The injustice of the world

We can often hear the question: "Why does God allow wars, diseases, disasters?" If God is truly loving and all-powerful, as Christians say He is, then why does He just sit in heaven, look at all the horrors that are happening on earth, and not stop them?

Such a question seems quite logical, if you do not take into account very important facts.

1. Free Will Given to Man

The first fact that is not usually taken into account is that we are created in the image of God. We were given authority over the Earth, and with authority, responsibility for our choices. This means that we have free will. We are built with the ability to make our own choices. Humanity is exercising its right of choice by choosing not to listen to God, which has led to the chaos and lawlessness that is present in the world today. We chose to question the commandment of God, who lovingly created us. We rejected Him!

2. Evil and the Devil

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*

The Bible calls disobedience to God a sin. Using free will to make sinful choices opens up the ability of the devil to influence our lives.

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." But, many people around the world (including people in positions of power) still live independently of God and are under the power of the evil one. And their daily choices continue to plunge the world into chaos and lawlessness.

3. Our God is not to blame

Ecclesiastes 7:29 *This only have I found: God created mankind upright, but they have gone in search of many schemes."*

In fact, when something bad happens in the world, God is not to blame. These are the consequences of the influence of the devil and the wrong choices made by people as a result of his influence. We should not blame God for what He is not responsible for.

If God used His power and authority to stop everything He doesn't like, He would take away our free will and put an end to everything that happens in the world. We would cease to be people capable of voluntarily choosing. True love always gives you a choice! Instead of blaming God for what mankind and the devil have done, it is better to ask God for forgiveness for accusing Him of the devil's deeds. Asking God for forgiveness is an important step towards healing from the curse of resentment, which is the consequence of unforgiveness, and taking the responsibility and power that God gives us to be "salt" and "light" for this world, telling people the truth.

When Jesus lived on earth, He exercised spiritual authority almost every day to stop sin and destroy the works of the devil!

1 John 3:8 *The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

Now that Jesus has ascended to the Father, He has left His Body, the Church, on earth! And He transferred to the Church all His authority and spiritual authority so that it could be effective in the struggle against the evil one!

Matthew 16:18-19 *And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

John 20:22-23 *And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."*

Sin spreads in the world because of the choice of many people. And the Church is called by God to use spiritual power to influence this world. By instructing people and preaching God's truths to them, we do what the Lord expects of us.

Ultimately, Jesus will return and remove the very presence of sin from the earth. But, until then, we have the opportunity to bless people by telling them the Truth about God!

1 Thessalonians 1:5 *because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.*

Prayer:

Father, thank You for giving me everything I need to overcome sin and the evil one.

Thank You for equipping me with the spiritual authority to be Your representative on earth. Help me and teach me to use spiritual authority to glorify Your name and defeat sin and all the works of the devil. In the Name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Week № 7. Overcoming Spiritual Obstacles

Day №1. Keys of the Kingdom

Confession, Repentance, Forgiveness

Let's start our lesson with the definition of the concept of "Keys".

Keys are tools for opening locks.

Matthew 16:19 *I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

God promises to give us the keys to the Kingdom of heaven that we can use to unlock spiritual locks.

Let's determine what these keys are:

CONFESSION, REPENTANCE, FORGIVENESS are the supernatural keys to the opening of spiritual prisons.

CONFESSION is agreement with what God says. Confession means: "To say the same thing as..." When we agree with God's diagnosis of our spiritual condition, it is the first step to solving spiritual problems or opening spiritual locks. Confession leads us to repentance.

REPENTANCE is a voluntary confession of a sin and a refusal to commit a sin. Literally, this word (metanoia) can be translated from the Greek: a change of mind or a reversal. Turning away from sin is a natural result of metanoia! It means reconnecting priorities to align our thoughts and values with the thoughts and values of God.

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

FORGIVENESS - absolution of guilt, release from well-deserved punishment (pardon, amnesty).

Christian forgiveness is not passivity or weakness; it is extremely energetic and active, it is a feat of faith. First of all, it is the feat of Jesus Christ. God's forgiveness of people is based on Jesus taking upon Himself the guilt of our sin. For a person, it is, of course, simply necessary to accept it by faith.

Isaiah 53:11 *After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.*

Also, the most important spiritual key is the forgiveness of other people who have sinned against us.

Matthew 6:14-15 *For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

Forgiveness works in two directions. At first, it is directed from God to us, then from us to our offenders.

With these spiritual keys of God, any spiritual locks can be opened.

Read a verse from the New Testament that talks about what Jesus will do in His ministry to people:

Luke 4:18-19 *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour"*



Describe in your own words what God has in store for you: _____

Because God promises us freedom, we can accept that we may have problems that have come into our lives through committing sins and living in a sinful world. And God the Father promises us all that is necessary that we may have a victorious life "in Christ."

GOD FORGIVES US! It shouldn't surprise you that God forgives you generously, so that's why He sent Jesus to die for you.

1 John 4:10 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

Isn't it amazing to know that Jesus took your punishment upon Himself? When you admit that you are wrong to take control of your life and reject His Lordship, God hears your confession and repentance and declares, "You are forgiven."

And now go to the "Room of Communication with God". Ask God to examine your heart and identify unconfessed sins in your life. Then confess them specifically to God.

Pray: *Father, I confess (a particular attitude or action) as my sin, I turn away from it and ask You to forgive me.*

As you pray, remember that you no longer have the right to live with the guilt of what He has already forgiven! Don't even let yourself think, "Well, God has forgiven me because He is God. I am grateful to Him for what He did, but that doesn't mean I can forgive myself! I feel that I do not deserve forgiveness; Therefore, I will punish myself. I'm still bad, even though God has forgiven me. By doing so, you are denying God's power and by your self-condemnation, you are putting yourself above His forgiveness!

Week № 7. Overcoming Spiritual Obstacles

Day № 2. Spiritual Laws

Psalm 19:8-12 *The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*

God wisely created the entire universe and gave all creation laws and rules of interaction. We can see this by studying the laws of the material world.

One of the most obvious laws of the material world is the LAW OF UNIVERSAL GRAVITATION. According to it, all bodies are attracted to each other according to a certain physical formula. This law is easiest for us to understand when we jump or throw any object up. It will inevitably be pulled back to the ground. The properties of these laws are such that they do not depend on our opinion and attitude to them. These laws just work. And, even if we are not familiar with their action or formula, we will still depend on their effect on us!

For example, even if we are not familiar with the formula of the law of universal gravitation, we will still be attracted to the earth.

Just as there are laws in the material world, there are many laws in the spiritual world.

Let's look at one of the most important laws of the spiritual world:

THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

Galatians 6:7-9 *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*

There is also the LAW OF GAINING RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE GOD (we have already studied it).

Romans 8:1-2 *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

We are saved and justified through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and this is the spiritual law of righteousness and salvation. We cannot influence it, we can only agree with it or reject it. In the case of rejection of the law of universal gravitation or not taking it into account,

the consequences will manifest themselves instantly (injury, mutilation and even death) In case of neglect or ignorance of spiritual laws, the consequences will also come, but they do not manifest themselves instantly.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 *When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, people's hearts are filled with schemes to do wrong.*

The Spirit of God, the Scriptures, people in the church, or circumstances may warn us to correct certain actions in our lives, but if we remain deaf and blind, then over time, the consequences of violating God's order can come into our lives.

The Bible describes many spiritual laws, we can recognize them by the words "if", "then".

THREE DIRECTIONS OF SALVATION FROM SIN. In order for us to orient ourselves properly in the spirit world and to live in God's order and blessing, we need to become familiar with the three acts of God's grace.

- ❖ Salvation from the penalty of sin (has eternal consequences);
- ❖ Salvation from the power of sin (has temporary consequences);
- ❖ Salvation from the presence of sin (has eternal consequences);

Salvation from the Penalty of Sin - Occurs When We Accept the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ by Faith in Our Lives

John 5:24 *"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life."*

Salvation from the power of sin occurs through victory over sinful deeds in our lives.

John 8:34 *Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."*

James 1:14-15 *but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

Even in the saved state, sin will always have consequences. They will not affect eternal salvation, but they can affect the quality of life. Sin can kill relationships, health, prosperity, take away joy, shorten the days of life, etc.

Salvation from the Presence of Sin - Will occur at the Second Coming of Jesus

2 Peter 3:13 *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.*



Why do we need to know and observe God's spiritual laws? (Describe in your own words)

Week № 7. Overcoming Spiritual Obstacles

Day № 3. Strongholds. Accept the freedom of Christ.

What are strongholds? These are the areas of life that have not yet fully submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (see diagram)

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

According to the verses given, mark the correct statements

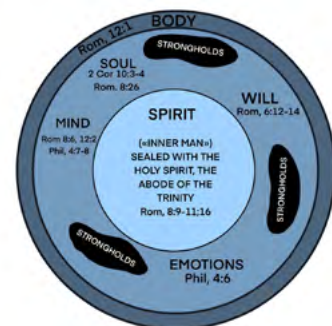
We take part in spiritual warfare

☐ We fight the evil one in the same way as the unbelievers around us do

☐ We have powerful weapons to win our battle

☐ Our goal is to ensure that every thought we have and every relationship is in harmony with our relationship with God

☐ Strongholds are often located in the sphere of the soul (mind, will, emotions)



We are engaged in a spiritual battle, but we are fighting with more than just our own strength and personal resources. We use God-given powerful weapons, such as the truth of His word, the understanding of the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual authority that Jesus Christ has given us. Our weapons also have the power to set people free and bring them to Christ.

WHAT DOES THE STRONGHOLD LOOK LIKE?

When we accept Christ and give our lives to Him, there are always areas in our lives that are not fully brought by us into subordination to God.

Although we sincerely seek to follow Christ with all our hearts, we still have resentments, bad habits, or long-standing relationships that need Christ's healing and freedom.

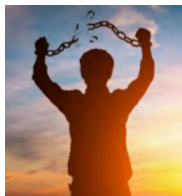
In one case, strongholds may be tiny resistance zones, and in another - they may be strong, fortified areas.

For example, a young father of a family accepted Christ. He was a faithful Christian with good leadership skills. However, he could snap and take out his anger on family members. When he asked the brothers in Christ to pray for him, God's Spirit revealed a stronghold in his life: pornography. This is what allowed Satan to touch his life. And as sometimes happens, feelings of depression and guilt manifested themselves in seemingly irrelevant anger. When he confessed his sin and destroyed his magazines and Internet pages, God miraculously freed him and his life changed.

One of the strongholds of one sister in Christ was more inconspicuous. Instead of listening to Christ's voice and allowing Him to control her attitudes and actions, she often allowed the fear of rejection to guide her life. She was constantly looking for approval. She was freed from this feeling when she learned to accept the unconditional approval and love of Christ and to hear His voice among all others.

As you grow in Christ, you are likely to discover sins and bad habits and false beliefs that you have allowed into your life for many years. This may include bitterness and anger towards the person who caused the pain, occult practices (horoscopes, fortune-telling, divination, participation in funeral rituals, idolatry, etc.), health-destroying habits, inclinations, fears, shame and guilt, traumatic life experiences and their consequences, pornography, masturbation or other lustful habits, domination, control, judgment, etc.

HOW TO FIND A STRONGHOLD?



It is necessary to prayerfully check your behaviour and obsessive thoughts. Below is an approximate list of thoughts and behaviours:

Difficulty loving people, feelings of superiority, feelings of humiliation, irrational fits of irritation, anger, yelling, swearing, remembering grievances, difficulty forgiving, depression, cravings for smoking, alcohol, drugs, suicidal thoughts, obsessive fears and imaginings, nightmares, cravings for violent music, memories of childhood violence, lustful fantasies and masturbation, chronic illnesses (hereditary), obsessions about the non-existence of God and non-salvation, rebellion against authorities (ministers, parents), etc.

In order for the stronghold to pass away from life, it is necessary to realize the reason for its appearance and the circumstances under which this stronghold was formed. In the matter of discovering strongholds, it is impossible to do without the guidance of the Holy Spirit and His revelation. We must work with the Holy Spirit to discover and get rid of strongholds. To do this, it is necessary to pray according to the example of David:

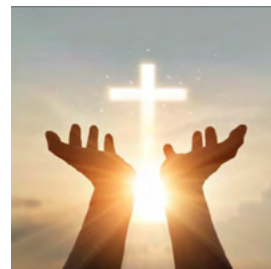
Psalm 19:13-14 *Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression. May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

Prayer:

My Heavenly Father, I want to belong entirely to You, and I don't want anything sinful to possess me. I cannot understand these issues without You, I need Your support and Your Light. Help me by Your Spirit to see what enslaves and oppresses me. In the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

HOW TO GET RID OF THE STRONGHOLD?

- ❖ To discover it, that is, to honestly face the truth;
- ❖ To forgive those who have caused the pain or sin committed against you;
- ❖ Repent of your sin and renounce the sinful act in your life;
- ❖ Delete all objects, books, music, Internet pages related to sin;
- ❖ To replace the stronghold with the fruits of God (word, behaviour, habit);
- ❖ To proclaim Jesus as the LORD of the "problematic area" of life;
- ❖ Observe and be alert in this area of life.



VICTORY BELONGS TO US!

1 Corinthians 15:57 *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our LORD Jesus Christ.*

As you search for possible strongholds in your life, realize that victory ultimately does not depend on you, but on what Jesus did for you on the cross. Victory and healing are already yours. It only needs to be accepted and applied in all spheres of life.

Memorize 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Week № 7. Overcoming Spiritual Obstacles

Day № 4. Occultism

Let us think about God's will regarding people's contact with the second heaven (Week 6, Day 2)

Exodus 20:3-6 *"You shall have no other gods before me. "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

Deuteronomy 18:10-13 *Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God.*

Today, in the 21st century, we are faced with many religious cults and occult practices of various kinds.

In modern times, Satan's strategies have become more sophisticated and cunning. People who participate in a variety of cults and "spiritual" practices are often unaware of the danger they are exposing themselves and their families to.

Occultism (from the Latin Occultus – secret or hidden) is the general name for teachings that recognize the existence of hidden forces in man and the cosmos, accessible only to the "enlightened" who have undergone special training. It is a broad term that covers activities, often of a religious nature, the source of power of which is not in God. It is an appeal to secret, hidden knowledge for answers, power, or control over a life situation.

IN ORDER TO ATTRACT PEOPLE INTO HIS DESTRUCTIVE NET, SATAN WORKS IN FOUR DIRECTIONS:

The first direction is OCCULT RITES. This includes numerous traps, sometimes harmless at first glance. This is faith in rituals and the fulfillment of superstitions such as: "black cat", "touching wood", "throw it over your right shoulder", "spill salt", etc. It also includes the rites of funeral magic: kissing deceased relatives, eating ritual food, carrying food, cigarettes and alcohol to the grave, etc.

The second direction is occult books and films, music and video games.

This includes watching horror films, films about fighting otherworldly forces, films about witchcraft (Harry Potter, etc.); reading books of black and white magic, as well as New Age books and books of sects and religions (The Watchtower and other religious literature).

Occult video games have become a real problem of the 21st century. This includes all video games that force people to become a member of a society or sect, as well as practices of witchcraft, spells, violence, and communication with spirits. Often, after coming into contact

with such films, books and video games, people become demonized, sleep is disturbed. They often manifest obsessions and fears that enslave and oppress them and can lead to suicide.

The third direction is fortune-telling and witchcraft.

Fortune-telling is an attempt to find out one's future through contact with a "soothsayer" or through the performance of rituals.

Witchcraft is contact with a supernatural reality (the second heaven) to use its power to influence the course of events in one's life or the lives of others.

This includes all types of appeals to "witch healers", divination in any way (coffee grounds, tea leaves, tarot cards, solitaire), fortune telling, reading horoscopes and acting in obedience to astrologers' predictions, participation in satanic sects and communities, participation in rituals (bewitchment, karma improving, etc.)

The fourth direction is occult practice. This is the most dangerous form of occultism. Through participation in yoga, Eastern religions, oriental martial arts, white magic, New Age, etc., a person comes under the influence of Satan. Also, the effect of occult practice is transmitted through relatives who pass it on by inheritance.

NOW PRAY AND ASK THE LORD TO REVEAL TO YOU IF YOU HAVE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE OCCULT.

Note what types of occult practices you have had in your life:



- ☐ Horoscopes;
- ☐ occult practices passed down by relatives;
- ☐ divination;
- ☐ occult symbols;
- ☐ reading occult literature;
- ☐ watching occult films;
- ☐ participation in occult video games;
- ☐ wearing amulets;
- ☐ participation in occult rites;
- ☐ orgies;
- ☐ Eastern religions and martial arts;
- ☐ yoga;
- ☐ extrasensory perception;
- ☐ other _____

If you find even one instance of involvement in the occult, you need to apply three biblical keys for victory and purification.

Confession, repentance, forgiveness – these are the biblical keys that apply to all problems.

- ❖ Deep, conscious and sincere repentance is necessary in every case of contact with darkness, as well as in the payment of money;
- ❖ Destruction of all impure objects and literature with prayer;
- ❖ Renunciation of all involvement and of seeking help or power from the devil;
- ❖ Forgiveness of all accomplices;
- ❖ Forgiveness of oneself;
- ❖ Breaking of spiritual ties;
- ❖ Breaking curses;
- ❖ Deliverance from unclean spirits is possible;

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, I believe that You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead. You redeemed me with Your blood, and I belong to You. I thank You, Lord Jesus, for Your shed blood, which cleanses me from all sin. I want to live for You. I come to You as my Deliverer.

You know what binds, torments, and defiles me, You know all my strongholds, and all the evil spirits that torment me. I proclaim the promise of Your Word, "Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the LORD shall be saved."

Now I confess all my occult involvement (list each case of involvement in the occult). I repent of them and ask for Your forgiveness. I renounce all my sins. I forgive all my offenders, because I want You to forgive me. I forgive all people who have involved me in the occult. Forgive me now and cleanse me with Your blood.

I repent for all the occasions when I, my family, and my people gave room to the enemy. I also repent of having paid money to the devil's servants for their services. I renounce all conspiracies and rituals to which I have been subjected or in which I or my ancestors have participated. I renounce every demonic force that has come into my life as a result of every contact with the devil. I also renounce my zodiac sign.

I ask You, Jesus, to wash me with Your blood and free me from all sinful ties and strongholds, and heal me from all the consequences of these sins. Amen.

Week № 7. Overcoming Spiritual Obstacles

Day № 5. Forgiveness

When God forgives us, He completely removes our sins and iniquities from us!

Hebrews 8:12 *For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.*

His mercy to us is so great that it is sometimes difficult for us to contain the fullness of His love and mercy for us.

God the Father has laid all the blame for our sins on His Son, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:8-10 *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*



God also wants us to forgive those who have sinned against us. And He makes our forgiveness dependent on how much we forgive other people.

Read *Matthew 18:21-35* and answer a few questions:

What debt did the king’s servant have? (1 talent 25.5 kg gold) _____

Could he have worked it out? _____

What did the king do to the debtor? _____

Was this fair to the servant? _____

What did the servant do to his debtor? _____

How did this story end? _____

Why do we need to forgive other people? _____

We need to remember a very important spiritual law:

Matthew 6:14-15 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Christ wants to give us abundant life; Satan wants to destroy it (*John 10:10*).

Resentment is Satan's tool by which he keeps people in bondage. The word "resentment" means that we are angry and refuse to forgive those who have wronged us.

Throughout our lives, each of us is hurt and wounded. Offences can be divided into two categories: when we are really offended and when it seems to us that we have been offended. But in both cases, we can either harbour bitterness against the offenders, or remind ourselves of how Christ has forgiven us! Resentment obstructs the flow of God's peace and joy in our lives, causing bitterness and anger to grow in our hearts. It controls our attitudes and actions, causing us to respond to people and situations based on past hurts rather than with love and freedom.

Resentment also becomes fertile ground where other diseases can grow. In addition to emotional poisoning, resentment can cause us physical problems over time, such as back pain, ulcers, arthritis, high blood pressure, cancer, etc.

Sometimes people think that by refusing to forgive their offenders, they are punishing them. But, in reality, the one who does not forgive suffers more!!

HOW TO FORGIVE?

In order to forgive, you need to know the truth about what forgiveness is, and what forgiveness is not. First of all, we need to know that we cannot forgive on our own, we need the help of the Holy Spirit! Therefore, first of all, ask Him for help in matters of forgiveness!

Forgiveness does not mean:

1. We try to forget what happened;
2. Downplaying the harm done;
3. Denial of anger or pain;
4. That the other person is innocent. We need to forgive regardless, but we cannot pardon a person – this is God's work.
5. That a person will remain unpunished (God's judgment awaits him);
6. Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation – the latter depends on the behaviour and attitude of the other person;
7. Once you're a victim, you don't have to be left in an unsafe situation. Forgiveness is an undeserved gift. Trust must be earned.

Forgiveness means:



1. Acknowledging what is really in our hearts when a sin is committed against us. Allow yourself to feel pain. And calculate the damage caused to you. Otherwise, you won't even be able to understand what to forgive for!
2. Recognition that the other person's action was wrong.
3. Separating the Sin from the Sinner (*John 8:1-11*). The abuser is also an ordinary person who is very vulnerable.
4. Choosing mercy instead of judgment (*James 2:12-13*).
5. Constantly reminding yourself that in the past, you also needed forgiveness and mercy.
6. Not waiting until forgiveness is earned (*Luke 23:34, Acts 7:60*).
7. Surrendering to God any rights to revenge that you may feel. (*Rome 12:17-21*).
8. Making a will choice by saying: «I forgive you». Forgiveness is a humble choice to agree with God's will!
9. Accepting God's healing from pain and suffering.
10. Forgiveness is a process similar to peeling off the layers of an onion: making choices and forgiving the person many times if necessary until feelings follow.

FORGIVE, AS YOU HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN

You might choose forgiveness only because you want to be whole, free from bitterness and anger, or because it is God's commandment. However, the best motivation for forgiveness is that Christ forgives you. As He hung on the cross with bleeding wounds, with a body broken by pain, separated from the Father's love for our sins, He cried out, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*" (*Luke 23:34*) His decision to forgive extended not only to those who crucified Him, but also to you and me. Our sins led Him to the cross. He loved us and died for us, despite our sins.

WHO TO FORGIVE:

1. Those who have sinned against you (including those who were supposed to protect you), for minor and large offences. Jesus asked the Father to forgive those who crucified Him
2. Those who have sinned against someone you love (you may find it harder to forgive, but the principles of forgiveness are the same).
3. People you have already forgiven before (forgive «seventy times seven!», which means infinity).
4. Myself (I will never forgive myself for this).
5. God (disappointment in God, accusation of God). God is not guilty, we have already talked about this with you (Week № 6, day 5). But, sometimes, it seems to us that He could have helped, and He did not! Therefore, this prayer must begin with repentance before God for the fact that we blamed Him for what happened. And then, honestly tell Him how you felt about Him.

Now let's make a list of those we need to forgive:

PARENTS _____

OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS _____

COLLEAGUES _____

FRIENDS _____

CHURCH MEMBERS _____

SOMEONE FROM YOUR PAST _____

YOU YOURSELF (WHY?) _____

GOD _____

Allow God to speak gently to your heart, to remind you of the people (circumstances) you need to forgive. Some you will remember now, others in a week or a month.

Whenever it is, come to God in prayer and say:



"Father, I forgive..." Don't forget all the truths about forgiveness that have been described above.

If you need the help of the Holy Spirit to forgive, ask Him for it.

Your mentor will also be willing to pray with you.

Day № 1. We are not alone. The Holy Spirit is a special Person.

Imagine if Jesus came to visit you today and you told Him that you wanted to grow spiritually. What do you think He would do? Would He heal you? Teach you? Would He give you new abilities? Think.

We would like to receive many things from Him, but the last thing we would expect is this: "So you want to grow? Fine, then I'm leaving. It's better for you." We would not want Him to utter such words and leave us. Would He have contributed in any way to our growth? But Jesus did just that: *"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you... But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."* (John 16:7, 13–15).

Jesus decided to ascend to heaven and continue His work from there, and He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and bring about the desired changes and spiritual growth in us. He said that the presence of the Holy Spirit would be better for us than even His presence. This means that having the Holy Spirit in your life is incredible!

Let us see what Scripture tells us about the Person of the Holy Spirit:

1. He is God, the third Person of the Godhead (*Matthew 28:19; John 14:17; Romans 8:9-11*)
2. He has the attributes of God: Eternal, Omnipresent, Omniscient (*Hebrews 9:14; Psalms 138:7; John 14:26; 1Corinthians 2:10-11*)
3. He gives a person everything he needs. Jesus was able to do all that was required of Him with the help of the Holy Spirit. **Isaiah 11:1-2** *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him — the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—*
4. He is an assistant. God, in His mercy and love, has given us free access to Himself through the Holy Spirit, access to the fullness of His wisdom and capabilities: **John 14:16-17**: *"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another (Greek allos – another like me) Comforter (Helper – modern Helper). Rus. translation of the Bible), may the Spirit of truth be with you forever..."*
5. He is a person. It is not just the "power" and "energy" of God. Like all persons, He has inherent characteristics of personality. He has His own character traits, His own opinion, His emotions, His own will.

1 Corinthians 12:11 *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. And, as with any person, it is necessary to build relationships and communicate with Him.*

2 Corinthians 13:13-14 *All God's people here send their greetings. May the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*



The Bible tells us that we can respond to His presence in four ways, consider them:

- ❖ resist the Holy Spirit. *In Acts 7:51* we read of people who practised religion carefully but resisted the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Every time we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit clearly and have no desire to obey, we resist Him. And even if we have done "all right" from a religious point of view, but His voice has been ignored, we have resisted the Holy Spirit;
- ❖ offend, grieve Him (*Ephesians 4:30-32*). We cause sorrow to the indwelling Holy Spirit by our irritation and anger, by shouting and slander, by malice and unforgiveness;
- ❖ quench the Holy Spirit (*1 Thessalonians 5:19*), quench His fire. Quenching brings inattention, indifference, ignorance, and simply forgetfulness. Sometimes days can pass and you still don't pay attention to Him;
- ❖ be filled with the Holy Spirit. *Ephesians 5:18* does not say, "be filled," but "go on being filled". This means that we can be filled with the Spirit always, 24 hours a day. This is what we are called to do, to always cooperate with the Holy Spirit in all areas of our lives. Because the Bible says, **Romans 8:14-16** *For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

There is a special attitude to the Holy Spirit in the Trinity itself. A rather reverent attitude towards Him, because He is the most tender and modest Person. He never promotes Himself, does not shout, is not rude, endures for a long time. He does a lot in the Church: he gives birth from above, gently rebukes, comforts, instructs, saves from danger, blesses, fills with peace, heals, frees from unclean spirits, and, at the same time, always points to Jesus and the Father.

Matthew 12:31-32 *And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.* There is one man in the Bible who wrote most of the Psalms. His name is David. God called him "a man after my own heart." Perhaps it is worth understanding why God treasured him so much.

Psalms 51:4-6 *Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge... **Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.** Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior; and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.*

Day № 2. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Read: *Luke 11:5-13; John 7:37-39; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 2:1-4.*

There are three important moments in the life of every Christian:

- 1) **repentance of sin;**
- 2) **water baptism**
- 3) **the baptism of the Holy Spirit**

We talked about the first moment - repentance of sin - in previous lessons. We will talk about the second one in the next lesson. But one of the most precious events in the life of a Christian is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, the baptism of the Holy Spirit can precede water baptism.

***Acts 10:44-47** While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."*

In order to understand what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is, it is necessary to explain the meaning of the word "baptize."

BAPTISM (from the Greek baptizo - to dip) - means complete immersion in water. This process can be best understood by the example of dyeing clothes. When white fabric is dipped in a dye solution, three consequences occur: The fabric is completely immersed in the solution, it gets wet and is dyed. Accordingly, baptism is a complete immersion in something, getting wet (the liquid inside) and coloring (changing the composition).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a complete immersion in the Holy Spirit, His penetration into the whole nature of a person and a change in the state of the heart or sanctification! Very often, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit can be accompanied by the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit: speaking in tongues, prophecy, miracles of healing. This phenomenon can be accompanied by a different range of experiences.

God has predestined each person to fulfill a special mission on earth. Without the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to do this.

***Acts 1:4-5; 8** On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*



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

Authority comes through Jesus, and the power of God comes through the Holy Spirit. To fulfill God's calling, we need to have both authority and power from God! It is also necessary to note three concepts in this matter:

- ❖ Baptism in the Holy Spirit (occurs once);
- ❖ Filled with the Holy Spirit (occurs daily);
- ❖ Ministering with the gifts of the Spirit (when prompted by the Spirit)



HOW DO I RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Get your heart ready. Cleanse your heart by repentance from pride and self-sufficiency and all sins known to you.

John 7:37-39 *On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." 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.*

Believe! Believe that this blessing from God is yours.

Galatians 3:13-14 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

Ask Jesus in prayer to baptize you with the Holy Spirit and tell him that you are ready for the service that is meant for you.

Accept. Often you just need to be silent and trust in the Holy Spirit. You may feel a special joy, a surge of energy, the visible presence of the Personality of the Godhead, and other sensations. You may begin to speak praises to God in a language you do not know.

A FEW TIPS

- ❖ It is best to pray with a mentor (baptized with the Holy Spirit) or in a home group, although God can baptize you in your personal prayer as well;
- ❖ Don't be afraid of the emotions that may accompany you. Surrender to God in trust;
- ❖ Remember, the Holy Spirit will not live with sin, so watch your heart carefully;
- ❖ Be filled daily and develop your relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Read Luke 11:9-13, and then discuss the question:

For what reasons might God not baptize with the Holy Spirit?

☐ When I am a sinner; ☐ When I am not worthy; ☐ None.



If you have not yet been baptized with the Holy Spirit or have not been filled in a long time, pray:

Dear Jesus! I am so grateful to You for the blood you have shed! Cleanse me of pride and self-sufficiency. You are my Lord and Master. Please baptize me with the Holy Spirit. I want to do Your will. I give up my fear of the supernatural and the fear of speaking a language I don't know. I proclaim Jesus to be Lord of my heart and my lips. I want to do Your will. Thank You. I receive the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now open your mouth and pray freely, and sing to God in an unknown tongue! Hallelujah.

Week №. 8. Power of God

Day № 3. God's Armour for Spiritual Victory

One of the most important factors for spiritual victory is the right attitude of the heart!

The order in the Kingdom of God is this: Strength comes through weakness. High position through humility. Greatness through service. In this world, weakness is not the most popular quality, nor is humility. In the world strength, speed, ambition are the qualities that lead to victory. But in the Kingdom of God there are completely different priorities, which at first glance seem unimportant for victory.

Read: 1 Samuel 16:7; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; Luke 14:11; Mark 10:42-44

So, in order to properly manage God's power, it is necessary to bring the heart into the right position.

Let's answer a few questions:



What does God look at when He builds a relationship with a person? _____

What is the advantage of weakness? _____

What does the spiritual law of advancement sound like? _____

What does the "servant" position lead to? _____

Why is it profitable to surrender? _____

And now that we understand the truth about the right attitude of the heart, we will talk about God's armour.

Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Can you imagine a warrior going to war without the necessary equipment? How effective will it be without proper uniforms and weapons? Such a soldier would not only find himself in a ridiculous and dangerous position, but it might even interfere with his own army.

God has prepared for us His armour for victory in spiritual warfare. And we need to use it. Because, having become a Christian, we are inevitably in a state of spiritual war with the kingdom of Satan.

Starting from *Ephesians 6:10-18*, connect the weapons in the left column with the corresponding descriptions in the right column.



BREASTPLATE
FOOTWEAR
HELMET
SWORD
SHIELD
BELT

SALVATION
GOD'S WORD
TRUTH
THE GOSPEL OF PEACE
RIGHTEOUSNESS
FAITH

Every morning we have to perform the ritual of dressing, just as we must, like a warrior, begin each day with preparation for battle.

What is the use of putting on one's weapons when the battle is over! Let's take a look at how to clothe ourselves with each piece of spiritual equipment. We need to realize that all of these weapons are spiritual positions in our hearts that we accept by faith.

The belt of truth is a spiritual position in which we stand with faith that there is no truth except Jesus and His word (*John 14:6; John 17:17*)

The breastplate of righteousness is the spiritual position in which we stand in the righteousness of Jesus that He has given us (*1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 8:33*) and resist the spiritual accusations of Satan, who is always busy accusing (*Rev. 12:10*)

Readiness to preach the gospel of peace is the spiritual attitude in which we are in connection with the Holy Spirit to be ready to be a witness of Jesus Christ when He chooses to send us to someone to bear witness (*Romans 1:16*)

The shield of faith is a spiritual attitude in which we, believing in the truth of God's Word, reject everything that does not correspond to the truth of Scripture, and also perform acts of faith by taking an active part in what we believe (*James 2:22; James 2:20; 1 Peter 1:22*)

The helmet of salvation is a spiritual position in which we take captive all thoughts that are not in line with the truth in obedience to Christ, and also hope that God is always for us (*Hebrews 6:18-19; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5*)

The sword of the Spirit (the word of God) is the spiritual position in which we quote and proclaim the word of God in response to Satan's temptations (*Matthew 4:3-11*)

Intercession and prayer are weapons to cover our backs and the backs of those who are in spiritual warfare (*Ephesians 6:18; Col. 4:3*)
Intercession is the most important strategic tool for the victory of God's people who are in God's calling!

Sunday №. 8. Power of God

Day № 4. God's Gifts

This lesson is called God's gifts. And it is important for us to understand that His gifts are very precious to us and are of great importance in enabling us to have the fullness of God's grace in our Christian life. That is why these gifts are called gifts of grace. **χαρισμα** (charisma) is a gift (of grace, gift). After the baptism of the Holy Spirit, **every** Christian receives several gifts from the Holy Spirit. It should be noted that the gifts of the Spirit are different from the natural talents of man. They are supernatural gifts, and they have God's purpose. These gifts are given only after being born again and being baptized by the Holy Spirit. They are given so that we can be transformed into the Son of God and for the building up of the Body of Christ. We cannot change by ourselves, we need God's gifts and equipment.

Ephesians 4:11-13 *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-13 *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

The Holy Spirit doesn't just want us to have a good and pleasant life, He works on the whole Body of Christ so that we become sanctified or set apart for Christ and transformed into His character.

Philippians 2:5 *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.* Usually people use their talents in order to gain either fame or profit for themselves. But God's gifts are aimed only at glorifying Jesus Christ and His work and His glory! Functionally, spiritual gifts fall into two categories: gifts of service and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of ministry are supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit in a believer.

Gifts of service	Gifts of the Holy Spirit
APOSTLE, PROPHET, EVANGELIST, PASTOR, TEACHER	Miraculous Powers, Gifts of Healing, Gifts of Help, Gifts of Administration, Prophecy, Ministry (Deaconship), Teaching, Exhortation, Charity, Leadership, Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, Gifts of Healing, Miracles, Discernment of Spirits, Different Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues

Although the gifts of service and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are somewhat different, there is a direct relationship between them. Certain gifts of service correspond to certain gifts of the Spirit. That is, what kind of ministry a person has largely determines what gifts of the Holy Spirit he will have.

For example, the activity of the evangelist is associated with such gifts of the Holy Spirit as healing and discernment of spirits and working miracles (*Acts 8:6, 7*);

In the ministry of the prophet, prophecy (*1 Cor. 14:29*) and the word of knowledge (*1 Cor. 24:25*) are of exceptional importance, in the ministry of the Apostle, the gift of Leadership, Faith, Miracles, Healing, the Word of Wisdom, Prophecy, and discernment of spirits are of exceptional importance.

In the ministry of a pastor, the gift of leadership, the gift of management, help, exhortation, the word of wisdom, and teaching are important.

In the ministry of the teacher, the gift of teaching, the word of wisdom, exhortations, prophecy, etc., play a crucial role. This relationship between the ministries and manifestations of the Holy Spirit is further emphasized by the fact that both are called "gifts" of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

Four gifts must be given special attention: the gift of the apostle, the prophet (the gifts of ministry), prophecy, and other tongues (gifts of the Spirit). All four of these gifts (*Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 14:1,39; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:4*) are of special importance in the Body of Christ and are the ones that Satan attacks the most. By abolishing or downplaying their importance, Satan can easily lead churches to extremes. The entire history of the Church speaks of this, as well as the history of churches in the Bible - for example, Corinthians and Galatians.

The gift of tongues is a very important gift of the Holy Spirit. Firstly, it is a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, secondly, it is very important for the life of prayer, and thirdly, it edifies the spirit of man and thus paves the way for the action of other gifts. Very often God strengthens us in the moment of our "infirmities" through this gift (*Romans 8:26*), when we do not know what to pray for and what to do.

Prophecy is one of the most important gifts of the Spirit, which He Himself allocates (*1 Corinthians 14:1*). This gift is important for edifying, strengthening, and encouraging the Church and is very important for discovering the "secrets of the heart" and correcting spiritual distortions. The Holy Spirit strongly encourages us to be "zealous" for His gifts to work in us. The word zealous can be translated as seeking, passionately wanting, and loving. Let's be obedient to His desires!

Day № 5. How to Deal with a Powerful Force

When God empowers us and gives us the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we can experience great blessings in our lives. Our lives change radically when God begins to work with us to accomplish His plans. We can see how the lives of many people are changing through our ministry. We can see supernatural phenomena and miracles. We can see visions and heal the sick. God does all this through man!

2 Corinthians 4:5-7 *For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.*

In these verses, the Apostle Paul speaks of the abundant power that is entrusted to us and that we should always remember that this is God's power and we are not its source, but only its bearer!

We must never forget that we are just "donkeys" on which the King of Kings rides.

In order to serve effectively and for a long time in the power of God, it is necessary to observe several important rules:

- ❖ After any meaningful service, it is always necessary to give all the glory to Jesus and go into the shadow of prayer for a while.
 - ❖ To have a "secret room" of communication with God at all times. And be in a personal relationship with Jesus;
 - ❖ Watch your heart and always listen to the correction of your spiritual friends. (*Pr 12:1*);
 - ❖ Be under spiritual protection. Be under authority. (*Matthew 6-10*);
 - ❖ Work in a team of servants. (*1 Corinthians 12:27*);
 - ❖ Continue to be sanctified (*Rev. 22:11*);
 - ❖ Do not confuse the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit. Always work on your character.
 - ❖ To love the people we serve. (*1 Corinthians 13*);
 - ❖ To be poor in spirit, always knowing our need of God. (*Matthew 5:3*);
 - ❖ To grow in the development of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (*1 Corinthians 14:1*);
- These important rules can keep us from pride and help us serve the Body of Christ effectively.



THE GIFTS AND FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-26 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

There is a difference between the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruit that comes from a relationship with the Holy Spirit.

A gift is first and foremost a means of service in the Kingdom of God. Its source and owner is the Holy Spirit. The gift is given to us for our use, and we will give an account for its use. *(Luke 19:11-27)*

Fruit is the result of the action of the Person of the Holy Spirit on our personality. It is the fruit of a relationship with God. Often, when we see the gift of the Holy Spirit manifested through a person, we may indeed feel admiration and awe, but this does not mean that the entire life of such a person is completely sanctified and blameless.

Here is what the Apostle Paul says about his ministry, separating the gift and the fruit:

1 Corinthians 9:27 *No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

For those who want to devote their lives to serving God and serve Him all their lives, two prerequisites must be observed:

To receive supernatural equipment - the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Take responsibility for their adoption and development.

Constantly work for Jesus to be LORD in all areas of our lives. This is the work of sanctifying life. There is no greater dignity and honour for human life than serving God! This is the supreme privilege of becoming His servant (slave)!

Even Jesus Himself voluntarily became God's servant for the salvation of mankind.

Isaiah 53:11-12 *After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Let's pray!

Dear Father, thank You that You did not leave me alone, but sent Your Helper and Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

I accept all the gifts that You have prepared so that

I can serve your Church by bearing fruit in the lives of others. I appreciate everything in Your plans for my life. Help me to work effectively with the other brothers and sisters You have prepared to serve in Your church.

Teach me all things so that I may glorify Your precious holy Name! In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit! Amen.

Day № 1. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. A new legacy.

On earth, we all have a family, even those who were abandoned by their parents have a father and a mother.

Another question: what kind of family was it?

Sometimes earthly families are more in line with God's plan, sometimes less so, but the fact is that even the best families are not perfect. In our earthly families, we get concepts of what is good and what is bad, we learn to live by copying the way of life that we see in our families.

When we are "born again" (of the Holy Spirit) and become Christians, we receive a new spiritual family.

John 3:6-8 *Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

Hebrews 2:11-12 *Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, "I will declare your name **to my brothers and sisters**; in the assembly I will sing your praises."*

First of all, in the new family we have the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Elder Brother! Our triune God is the foundation of our new family. We also find ourselves in a huge family of God's children, who are also born again. And in this new family, we learn to live our Heavenly Father's rules in His home, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and in our relationship with our Big Brother and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:15 *if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.*

We now have two legacies. One is earthly, which came to us from our earthly parents. One is heavenly, which came to us from our new family.

Earthly heritage is a part of material and spiritual culture, created by past generations and passed on to the future as something valuable and revered.

The inheritance of heaven is all the promises of God that He has made our inheritance in His Son Jesus Christ, which we accept by faith in our lives.

Romans 8:16-17 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

1 Peter 2:9-10 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

Both of these legacies have an impact on our lives.

The Bible tells us a lot about our new family, the Church, and about the rules of our relationship with each other. God also tells us that if earthly heritage and culture conflict with the rules in His home, then we need to leave behind the old way of thinking and living and learn to live in a new way.

In the church, as in God's family, we can receive what we should have received in our mortal families but have not received: acceptance of us as we are, compassion, parental care, and protection.

In God's new family, we can experience the healing of our hearts. God arranged it so that a newborn has a family: mum, dad and other relatives. What would happen if children were born without a father and mother willing to feed and care for their children?

From the first day of their life, children require the love, work and constant attention of their parents. Many, unfortunately, are deprived of this; maybe you are one of those unfortunate children.

Something similar happens in the spiritual family. When a person is born "again", he needs people close to him who can take care of his spiritual needs. Having accepted the faith, the early Christians immediately formed "houses" in groups of 10-15 people. They did not have any special buildings for meetings. Instead, they went from house to house, shared their daily bread, encouraged each other, and responded to each other's needs.

As the centuries passed, God's people ceased to be a family and became an organization. Close, familial relations between believers gave way to formal meetings held in special buildings called "churches."

The word "church" cannot be used to describe a building, a structure.



The New Testament word "ekklesia" ("church") means "those who are called." According to God's plan, it is not the spires of church buildings, but the **special relationships between people that should show where the Kingdom of God is.**

WHAT IS CALLED "THE BUILDING" IN EPHESIANS 2:19-22?

- ☐ A building erected on a plot of land;
- ☐ People who have become the abode of Christ;
- ☐ The exact meaning is not clear, it can be understood in different ways;
- ☐ Where God dwells (see v. 22) _____
- _____
- _____



Week № 9. My New Family

Day № 2. Brothers and sisters. Homegroups.

Nowadays, more and more Christians are trying to live the Bible. In all corners of the world, "small" or "home" groups are formed, which make up the Body of Christ.

As parts of the Body, they form its "cells". Any organism consists of cells. And this process of multiplication contributes to the growth and strengthening of the Body of Christ.

During Sunday or holiday services, we see how many "cells" merge together to glorify God and study the Word of God, but personal spiritual life usually takes place within the framework of a spiritual family - a home group.

You and your home group will be served by someone who is very eager to help you. In time, as you are ready to serve, you will be able to lead a home group.

A home group, like a spiritual family, is a circle of people who know each other well. Therefore, there are usually no more than 15 people in a home group. Very soon you realize that all members of the home group are different—some of them are mature Christians, others are not. You will grow spiritually with these people. Like a toddler watching over his parents and older brothers, you will form your own way of life in Christ as you observe and learn to exercise faith in a variety of life circumstances.

All of us, in relation to each other, are brothers and sisters who have different spiritual ages.

To grow up, a person needs about twenty years. Spiritual growth also takes time. However, in contrast to biological growth, spiritual development proceeds at different speeds. Moreover, you will meet people whose spiritual development turned out to be one-sided - those who studied the Bible well, but for some reason did not lead anyone to God and did not help anyone to grow spiritually.

Hebrews 5:11-14 *We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*





In Hebrews, the writer expresses his deep disappointment with those he is addressing. Why did they grieve him so much? THEY NO LONGER TRY TO _____. THEY NEEDED _____ AND NOT _____

The spiritual age of a Christian cannot be determined by his birth certificate. Some Christians "with many years of experience" have not been able to grow up, while others are able to reach real maturity in a matter of months. As the baby grows, it moves from milk to solid foods. The writer of Hebrews states that if you do not switch to "solid foods," your spiritual growth may come to a halt. In order to grow, it is necessary to have God-approved factors for spiritual growth:

At the new birth, it is necessary to receive spiritual care from parents (mentoring and care).

In the beginning, "milk" is needed - basic teaching in faith and righteousness. **1 Peter 2:2** *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,*

It is necessary to gradually learn to distinguish between good and evil from the point of view of the Word of God. And to reject evil using "spiritual keys": confession, repentance, forgiveness. It is necessary to be in a spiritual family, where the processes of growing up take place.

1 Corinthians 14:26 *What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.*

It is necessary to be a witness of Jesus Christ. **Romans 1:16** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes...*

It is necessary to learn to take responsibility in the spiritual family for the growth of other people. **2 Timothy 2:2** *And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.*

It is necessary to learn how to use the power and authority of the Kingdom of God for spiritual warfare. **2 Timothy 2:3**, *Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.* All of these processes must take place in the spiritual family—the home group. We can see the example of the growth of brothers and sisters in the home group of Jesus Christ. (Sisters - Martha, Mary, Mary Magdalene and other women)

Jesus was a spiritual parent and an example who fed his newborn disciples. In the beginning, He fed everyone with "milk." Later, He taught His disciples to distinguish between good and evil and taught deliverance from evil. He was always with His disciples in the family, and the disciples could see all the works of the Kingdom of God through Him. He taught His disciples to be His witnesses and sent them to bear witness. Jesus taught them to serve one another and to take responsibility for the growth of others. He taught his disciples to use the power and authority of the Kingdom of God.

All of the above means growth in faith, hope and love! Following the above rules for spiritual growth is likely to help you grow as well. God help you!

Week № 9. My New Family

Day № 3. Spiritual Growth

Read **1 John 2:12-14**

Based on what you have read, name the three ages of spiritual maturity of those who live in the Kingdom of God:

C _____

Y _____ M _____

F _____



In order to build healthy relationships in the Church, it is necessary to have an understanding of the spiritual age of the people around us, as well as to understand our spiritual stature.

CHILDREN. These are special people. They are extremely gullible and naïve. Because of their inexperience, they lack common sense. They can put themselves in great danger without even realizing it. They need the constant care of the "Fathers" and the help of the "Young Men".

Spiritual children know how to shout perfectly and always see injustice (of course, in relation to themselves). It seems to them that the whole world revolves around them and their needs.

What kind of spiritual help do spiritual children need?

They need to be protected from false teachings and cults, to strengthen their faith that they have truly become children of God, to help them realize the love of the Heavenly Father, to help them get rid of the "baggage" that they brought from their old life, to support them in difficult moments, to explain the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper, to explain the meaning of certain passages about the Holy Trinity. They need prayer for their healing, they need consolation in despondency and trouble.

Without a mentor, it will be very difficult for a spiritual child to grow spiritually and have the right spiritual development. Very often in churches you can meet abandoned and underdeveloped children at a mature physical age.

YOUNG MEN

The qualities of the "young men" are described in **1 John 2:13-14**.

Let's list them: **young men have defeated the evil one, they are strong, the Word of God dwells in them.**

A spiritual youth is a Christian who has come out of spiritual "childhood", has grown stronger and has already withstood several spiritual battles with Satan. Only the one who has defeated the enemy in himself is ready to protect others from him.

Young men usually already have victory over many "strongholds" in their lives. They know the power of God and have a personal relationship with God. Young men usually already have the skill to hear the Word of God with their hearts and to obey that word. They are familiar with their spiritual gifts and have experience using spiritual gifts to serve others. Yet, young men lack patience and wisdom in resolving more complex spiritual issues. They can still seek their own, even when using the power of God. They can indiscriminately enter into various conflict situations in order to prove their rightness.

FATHERS

The qualities of the "fathers" are described in **1 John 2:13-14**

Let's enumerate them: the fathers knew the Eternal One from the beginning, they knew the "Beginningless One".

The main difference between fathers and young men is the presence of children and followers. These are Christians for whom the knowledge of God has become the main goal of their lives.



Philippians 3:7-8 *But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ...*

Fathers are the kind of people who can say, "I have been following the Lord for so long that I know His ways." They no longer just know the Word of God like young men, they know the character of their Master. They are experienced in serious spiritual battles, and their ministry is already directed at more than one or two believers. They can say that my whole life belongs to Jesus and is dedicated to serving His people. They have a good taste of God's presence and are "worshippers" throughout their lives. These people are able to receive God's love and pour it out on God's people.

What does it take to grow faster from a child into a young man? To have a guide, to abide in the Word of God, and to reject the old way of life.

What does a young man need to become a father? To learn how to defeat the devil, to train in helping others. To devote more time to knowing God.

And on what spiritual level are you? (Mark the steps you have passed)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ I attend services | ☐ I resist diseases |
| ☐ I read the Bible regularly | ☐ I am not tempted |
| ☐ Taking Mentoring 1 | ☐ I skillfully manage finances |
| ☐ Was baptized | ☐ I know how to restrain myself |
| ☐ Not everyone understands me | ☐ I regularly testify |
| ☐ Baptized with the Holy Spirit | ☐ I am a mentor for the first part of the mentoring |
| ☐ I know how to fight sins | ☐ I am a mentor for the second part of the mentoring |
| ☐ I know how to forgive | ☐ I lead a home group |
| ☐ I pray regularly | ☐ I rejoice in the service of others |
| ☐ I have no doubt about salvation | ☐ I regularly communicate with God |
| ☐ Taking Mentoring 2 | ☐ I participate in healing and deliverance |



It is impossible to immediately turn from a child into a father, it takes time, effort, the help of brothers and sisters, as well as God's grace!

Do not be afraid, under the care of Jesus you will grow up and become a good father!

Day № 4. How to become part of a new family. Baptism, the LORD's Supper.

When we are born again, we become God's child and the Holy Spirit places us in God's new family.

1 Corinthians 12:13 *For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body — whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

In order to testify to our spiritual transformation, invisible to the eye, God commanded us to perform water baptism.

A CALL TO BE BAPTIZED **Matthew 28:18-20** *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

HOW DID JESUS COMMAND TO TEACH THE NATIONS?

According to Jesus, water baptism is an important part of following Him. For us, this is a convincing way to proclaim His Lordship over our lives. This is something like a marriage dedication. When a man proposes to his future wife, he usually gives a ring, thereby expressing love and devotion. However, the wedding ceremony is also very important. By publicly declaring their devotion to their spouses, they say that they belong to each other and there is no turning back.

Baptism is the same thing. When we are baptized, we declare to God, ourselves, and others that from that moment on, Jesus is the Lord of our lives. Baptism is also God's way by which He really tells us, "You are mine. You are cleansed and forgiven. I love you. You belong to My family forever." It's more than just words. It proclaims that you are now a new person who belongs to Christ.

WHY WAIT?

Acts 2:41 *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

Acts 8:35-38 *Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.*

Based on the above passage, what did people do to qualify for baptism? _____

You may have been baptized as an infant in the past or simply as a ritual to join the Church. For centuries, religious tradition has distorted the teachings of the Bible.

Baptism is a way to openly declare that you believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as Lord. Babies can't do that. When you accept Christ as Lord, you qualify for baptism for the first time in your life!



BASED ON THE ABOVE SCRIPTURES, WHEN WERE NEW CONVERTS BAPTIZED?

☐

A few months later

☐

as soon as possible

☐

Easter Sunday

You will not find a single example in the scriptures where people would postpone baptism. Once you have believed in Christ and turned to Him, there is no reason to delay in confessing Jesus as Lord through the witness of baptism.

Some converts may say, "I don't want to hurt my relatives." Instead, they should have asked, "How hurt would my Lord be if I put my relatives before Him? Am I ashamed of my devotion to Christ? Will my relatives ever choose the way of Jesus if I do not tell them that I have made a life-changing decision?"

NOTE: However, children and teenage minors in unbelieving families should discuss baptism with their parents and obtain their permission to be baptized. Scripture says that we should honour our parents. This is the only biblical reason why baptism can be postponed until adulthood.





WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT BAPTISM?
WRITE THEM DOWN BELOW AND DISCUSS THEM WITH YOUR MENTOR:

RESOLVED:

I WISH TO BE BAPTIZED (Date) «___» _____ r.

GUESTS WHOM I INVITE TO WITNESS MY BAPTISM: _____

Prayer:

*LORD, thank You for redeeming me with Your blood from the devil, I thank You for the opportunity to be a part of Your family.
I dedicate my life to You! Amen.*

Week № 9. My New Family

Day № 5. My rights and obligations

So, having accepted Jesus Christ into our hearts and become children of God, we find ourselves in a spiritual family.

And, as we have already learned, in this family there are different ages and statuses for all members of a large family. And we also have new rights and responsibilities, knowing which we will be able to live as effectively as possible in our new family.

In a home church, you have the right to be heard, you have the right to friendship, to help, to be mentored, to be cared for.

In order for the church to be a home, it is necessary to create an atmosphere of justice and mercy.

Psalm 88:15 *Justice and justice are the foundation of Thy throne, mercy and faithfulness go before Thy face.*

Older brothers (fathers and young men) must learn to show justice and mercy. And to help people resolve difficult situations both outside the church and inside it.

1 Corinthians 6:1-6 *When any of you has a legal dispute with another, does he dare go to court before the unrighteous rather than before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you not competent to settle trivial suits? Do you not know that we will judge angels? Why not ordinary matters! So if you have ordinary lawsuits, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? I say this to your shame! Is there no one among you wise enough to settle disputes between fellow Christians? Instead, does a Christian sue a Christian, and do this before unbelievers?*

Older brothers should be an example, not an element of control!

1 Peter 5:1-8 *So as your fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings and as one who shares in the glory that will be revealed, I urge the elders among you: Give a shepherd's care to God's flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly. And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock. Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away. In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. And God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you. Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour.*

Justice, wisdom, mercy and love are the basis of relationships in a spiritual family!

You also have a responsibility to be punctual (not to be late or miss home church and general meetings), to respect the pastor and mentor, to respect the opinions of others, to be open to rebuke and correction (this applies to both older and younger people), to help and serve other people, to respond to the needs of the saints.

Galatians 6:1-6 *Brothers and sisters, if a person is discovered in some sin, you who are spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. Pay close attention to yourselves, so that you are not tempted too. Carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Let each one examine his own work. Then he can take pride in himself and not compare himself with someone else. For each one will carry his own load. Now the one who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with the one who teaches it.*

In the church, too, there are always people who are bolder and stronger, and there will also be people who are weaker. But, God gives us the rules of relationships between such categories of people!

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 *And we urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish the undisciplined, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient toward all. See that no one pays back evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all.*

Romans 14:1-8 *Now receive the one who is weak in the faith, and do not have disputes over differing opinions. One person believes in eating everything, but the weak person eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not despise the one who does not, and the one who abstains must not judge the one who eats everything, for God has accepted him. Who are you to pass judgment on another's servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day holier than other days, and another regards them all alike. Each must be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day does it for the Lord. The one who eats, eats for the Lord because he gives thanks to God, and the one who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. For none of us lives for himself and none dies for himself. If we live, we live for the Lord; if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

Do you know the difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan and the world? Special relationships between people. So let us be good sons and daughters of our spiritual family.

The Church of God is a special people, redeemed by Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. But, it is still not perfect, due to the fact that we are all in spiritual growth.

Let's contribute to our spiritual family! And, even if we experience injustice and pain in our spiritual family, we will always know that God is not like people. Never judge God by His people. He is holy and is who He is. And we can rely on Him.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for making me part of Your family, teach me the rules in Your home, the church.

I want to bring blessings to my brothers and sisters!

Week № 10. Certificate

Day № 1. God's Promises

On the pages of the Bible, God, through the apostles and prophets, revealed to us many different promises. We remember some of them by heart, and some, sometimes, we have not even heard of. But, it is through faith in God's promises that we become partakers of them. Through faith in God's promises, they become our inheritance.

2 Peter 1:1-4 *From Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, have been granted a faith just as precious as ours. May grace and peace be lavished on you as you grow in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord! I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. Through these things **he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature**, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire.*

The Kingdom of God becomes ours when we accept God's promises by faith.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 *So then, no more boasting about mere mortals! For everything belongs to you, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future. Everything belongs to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.*

Often, in order to invite a person to be reconciled with God, believers call people to the Church.

The Church is the dwelling place of God and there is a high probability that a person will meet God there. But nevertheless, it is not the Church that saves a person, nor belonging to a certain denomination.

The Bible states that we are saved by personal faith in the Truth.

Habakkuk 2:4 *Look, the one whose desires are not upright will faint from exhaustion, but the person of integrity will live because of his faithfulness.*

Hebrews 10:38-39 *But my righteous one will live by faith, and if he shrinks back, I take no pleasure in him. But we are not among those who shrink back and thus perish, but are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.*



Think about when and how God spoke to you personally and His Word came alive within you.

What did God say to you at that moment?

In order for you to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ, someone prayed to God for you, someone told you about one of God's promises, someone showed you a different way of life that was different from the usual sinful way of life of your environment.

Someone has dedicated their lives to bringing the Good News to you personally!

Let's look at one of God's most precious promises:

1 John 5:10-15 *(The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified concerning his Son.) And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The one who has the Son has this eternal life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have this eternal life. I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have before him: that whenever we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in regard to whatever we ask, then we know that we have the requests that we have asked from him.*

This promise of God states that if we have accepted Jesus Christ into our lives, we have eternal life, and if we have become God's children, we can receive an answer to prayer that is in accordance with God's will without hindrance! And God wants: **(1 Timothy 2:4) all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.**

Therefore, prayer for the salvation of people unequivocally and always corresponds to the will of God the Father! When we agree to accept God's commission and bring God's promises into the world, we become intermediaries between people and Christ. This is the most exciting adventure you will ever experience!

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 *And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation. Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His plea through us. We plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!"*

Prayer:

Father, I thank You for Your precious promises, I accept them in my heart, and I want to share them with the people You send me to!

Week № 10. Certificate

Day № 2. God's Desire

Matthew 18:12-14 *What do you think? If someone owns a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go look for the one that went astray? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. In the same way, your Father in heaven is not willing that one of these little ones be lost. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.*

So, our Heavenly Father's desire is to seek and save lost people!

Let's take a look at what God's plan of salvation looks like for people.

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Acceptance of salvation from sin, through the acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by faith in one's life. It is not just the adoption of a new philosophy of life or belief system, it is the entry into a personal relationship with the resurrected Jesus Christ and God the Father, through the Holy Spirit!

Accepting the Lordship of Jesus Christ into the life of a believer. When we come to the cross, we choose to entrust our lives completely to the will and guidance of Jesus Christ. He becomes our Lord and begins to dwell in our hearts.

Immersion (baptism) of a believer in the Body of Christ.

Christ has a new, special Body today. It consists of believers who are united together by the Holy Spirit. When Christ comes to dwell within us, our top priority is a personal relationship of love with Him and active participation in the life of the Body of Christ, which is made up of Christian communities.

The Believer's Deliverance from the Power of Sin.

We receive freedom from the punishment of sin at the cross of Jesus; We find deliverance from the power of sin by dealing with the spiritual strongholds in our lives with the help of other members of the home group. It is impossible to "accomplish one's own salvation" on one's own, alone. Christ produces this salvation through the life of His Body.

Often, Christians see the church only as an organization whose programs they are supposed to support and participate in. Believing that everyday Christian life is a "personal matter" for everyone, never achieving victory over the power of sin. Thus, they are deprived of one of the most important components of their salvation.

When we tell a person only about the cross of Calvary and deliverance from the punishment of sin, ending with the words: "And then God will allow you to go to heaven after death," we leave a person without understanding how he can overcome the power of sin.

If we say, "God has a wonderful plan for your life," but forget to say that this plan includes active participation in the life of the Body of Christ, we are not telling him the full truth. We give him reason to think of the "church" as something not directly related to our salvation from the power of sin. Of course, it is not just our being in church that saves us, but Christ, working through His Body, brings us deliverance. And for this to happen in our lives, we must take our place in His Body.

The very first thing the Holy Spirit does when we come to the Cross is to baptize us into the Body of Christ (*see 1 Corinthians 12:13-14*). And until we join the Body, receive instruction on how to live a spiritual life, and begin to instruct someone ourselves, we will not be able to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling"! We are not able to work out our salvation from the power of sin on our own, independently of each other.

Underline the following scriptures that you feel best support this truth:

- ❖ *Romans 15:14 But I myself am fully convinced about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another.*
- ❖ *Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity to indulge your flesh, but through love serve one another.*
- ❖ *Ephesians 4:32 Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you;*
- ❖ *Ephesians 5:21 and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ;*
- ❖ *Philippians 2:4 Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well;*
- ❖ *Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the LORD has forgiven you, so you also forgive others;*
- ❖ *Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and exhorting one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, all with grace in your hearts to God;*
- ❖ *1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing;*
- ❖ *Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "Today," that none of you may become hardened by sin's deception;*
- ❖ *Hebrews 10:24 And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works;*
- ❖ *Philippians 2:12 So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence but even more in my absence, continue working out your salvation with awe and reverence,*

The Greek word translated "work" literally means "to work hard toward a certain goal at the appointed time." We don't do it on our own, but with other members of the Body of Christ!

Week № 10. Certificate

Day № 3. Who am I in Christ? Destination.

Do I realize how much God gave me when I made the decision to become His child?

In order to preach the gospel effectively, it is not only necessary to believe what God has done for everyone, but it is very important to believe in what He has done for me personally. It is necessary to agree with how God has believed in me and to accept our new position **in Christ**. If He did not believe that we could reject sin, defeat Satan, work miracles and enter into His glory, He wouldn't call us to do it! (*Mark 11:23*).

Let's look at how God believed in some people and called them to a certain position in His Kingdom.

Peter was proud and denied Jesus. Moses argued with God and said that God's choice (of Moses as the leader of His people) was not right. Saul (Apostle Paul) imprisoned Christians, and agreed to their murder. Joseph believed in dreams, as a sign from God, for which he was sold into slavery. And there are quite a lot of similar examples in the Holy Scriptures!

None of these people would have witnessed God's glory if they had not believed what God said about them and what He called them to do!

Our God is a great God, and He in Christ made us in His image! He wants us to be great people, capable of great things, He believes in us. And it provides us with everything we need to fulfill His commissions.

Romans 8:29-34 *because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is the one who will condemn? Christ is the one who died (and more than that, he was raised), who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us.*

Let's trace the sequence of our destiny:

FORESEEN (FOUND OUT IN ADVANCE)

PREDESTINED TO BE LIKE THE SON

CALLED

MET

GLORIFIED

HE HAS GIVEN US ALL THINGS
HE INTERCEDES FOR US

God's ultimate goal is to glorify us as members of the Royal Family before all creation - those who chose Him and were not ashamed of Him when He came in an inglorious form! (*Isaiah 53*). While Jesus has not yet come to earth again as King of Kings, we live by faith in who He is and who we are in Him (*1 John 3:1-2*).

To believe in our calling in God is not to invent fables about ourselves. It is not to say about ourselves what we are not. It is to believe what God has said about us. It is to believe in the destiny that God the Father has given us **in Christ Jesus**. This is the work of faith that will one day be rewarded by God (*2 Timothy 4:7-8*).

Romans 12:1-3 *Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice – alive, holy, and pleasing to God – which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith.*

What does it mean to think sensibly about yourself?

Let's answer a few questions?

God wants me to feel humiliated _____

God has given me a great destiny _____

God wants me to be inconspicuous and "grey" in this world of _____

God wants me to be a witness of His beauty, majesty, and honour _____

What has the Lord prepared for me? To be humiliated or great? "Grey" or bright (like light)? _____



Matthew 5:13-16 *"You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its flavor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people. You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. People do not light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven.*

Acts 17:6 *When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city officials, screaming, "These people who have stirred up trouble throughout the world have come here too.*

HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS

An important part of our testimony is our correct understanding of humility and meekness. People often have an erroneous opinion about the humility of believers. It is seen as weakness.

What is humility and meekness? And how do these concepts fit in with a strong testimony?

Humility is a person's conformity to God's status and calling (*Matthew 24:45-47*) It is important to know and worthily conform to who God has made you and what He has called you to in life. To be faithful to our mission on earth, given to us by God personally.

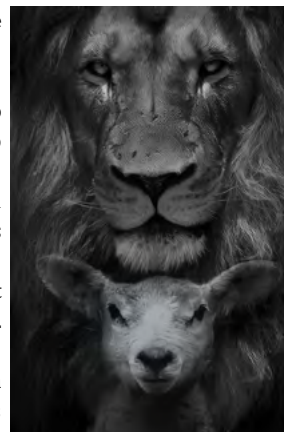
Meekness is a developed feature of a person's character. Meekness means the ability to control emotions, the willingness to forgive mistakes and offences from others, realizing how much the LORD has forgiven us! Those who have not experienced the forgiveness of sins by the Father cannot be truly meek!

Meekness helps a person to patiently endure insults, while not being irritated in public, not indignant and not wanting revenge. Meekness is a quality that combines gentleness of character with firmness of spirit. Meekness should not be identified with weakness of character and lack of will.

For example, in the Bible, Moses is called "the meekest of all men on earth" (*Num. 12:3*). He was a resolute and strong-willed man, a great leader and prophet, on whose orders about three thousand Jews involved in the cult of the golden calf were killed (*Ref.32:27-28*).

Jesus is our ultimate example of meekness and humility. And He says that we can learn these qualities from Him.

Matthew 11:29-30 *Take my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and my load is not hard to carry."*



Week № 10. Certificate

Day № 4. You go...

Matthew 28:19-20 *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Jesus calls us to take an active stand in spreading the Good News!

To do this, you can take courses in evangelism (which is sometimes very important), but sometimes it is enough just to love the Lord. When we love Jesus Christ, we simply cannot help but tell people about Him.

Someone who loves Jesus simply cannot remain silent about Him.

ANSWER THE QUESTION:

Who or what helped you come to Christ? _____

And what about your Christian friend? _____

Your personal testimony can cover two areas:

Experiences that contributed to your coming to salvation

Events that took place after your conversion in which God's love and protection were manifested.

You can take the example of the Apostle Paul's testimony

Before I became a Christian, my life was.... *Acts 22:3-5*

This is how I realized that I needed to follow Jesus: *Acts 22:6-9*

Here are the details of how I received Christ: *Acts 22:10-13*

Here's what it means to me to be a Christian: *Acts 20:24*



And now it's your turn! Write your testimony on a separate piece of paper, and tell an unbelieving acquaintance about it. And ask permission to pray for him.

Describe the person's reaction to your testimony _____

PREPARATION BEFORE THE TESTIMONY!

In order for unbelievers to come to salvation, your intercession is necessary.

As *Ephesians 2:1-3* says, Satan made them deaf and blind to the words and presence of the LORD. We ourselves were once in the same situation and...

«... lived, according to the custom of this world, according to the will of the prince who dominates the air, the spirit that now acts in the sons of disobedience.»

Unbelievers are spiritually helpless. They live in darkness. They do not understand how great God's desire is to give them new life. These people are like a blind man who walks on the edge of an abyss, unaware of the danger that threatens him.

In the spirit world, there is always a great struggle for the souls of men, and you enter into this struggle when you bring the word of the Gospel to unbelievers. You need to understand that there is a conflict between the forces of darkness and the forces of light. Therefore, a person's conversion does not begin with the words you say to him. This process begins with intercessory prayer directed against the strongholds in that person's life.

BASIC RULES OF EVANGELISM:

Start by building simple human relationships. Become just buddies with another person. First, find points of contact that are not related to religion: leisure, sports, hobbies, work, joint time for communication... Recognize in this relationship the strongholds of this person and begin to pray against these strongholds.

Our mission is not to impart information to unbelievers, but to help them see and experience the touch of the living Christ who dwells in us. We should seek to bring man into a personal relationship with Christ.

Listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit to understand the right time to evangelize.



Just before you give your testimony of conversion and testify about Christ, take a short pause to bind the authorities (without the unbeliever present). This prayer may sound something like this: "In the Name of Jesus Christ, I now bind all unclean spirits that influence this person (Name) and forbid them to influence his free choice. So that he may freely accept or reject Jesus Christ."

After that, tell your testimony of conversion (not very long and just the essence) and the basics of the good news, see Diagram Week Nº 3 Day Nº 3. And most importantly, tell about God's love! Week Nº 1.

Be prepared to offer a prayer of repentance and conversion to Christ. This prayer can sound like this:

"Heavenly Father! I come to You in the name of Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, He died for me, took my sins upon Himself, and rose again on the third day. I ask you to forgive my sins. Jesus Christ, please come into my heart, be my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' Name. Amen."

WHAT TO AVOID WHEN DEALING WITH NON-BELIEVERS:



Your story should not sound monotonous or "recorded".

Your story should not sound unconvincing and ignorant, you should clearly understand the essence of the gospel.

Avoid talking about the denominational differences of the church, talk about God.

Be prepared to patiently answer difficult questions about God and the Bible; see Week Nº 2.

Avoid arguments and the desire to prove something and gain the upper hand in the conversation. Respect the person's choice.

Even if the person does not accept Christ this time, continue the relationship. Let the seed of God's Word sprout.

If a person has accepted Christ, you have become a spiritual father to him! Begin to care for him, and feed him the truths of the Kingdom of God, using the tools of mentoring.

***Prayer:** O LORD, thank You for giving me the honour of being Your witness, and I choose to dedicate my life to spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Week № 10. Certificate

Day № 5. What's next?

CONGRATULATIONS!

Today is the last day of studying Mentoring № 1 "Touching Hearts." By completing it, you have shown that you are serious about growing and continuing to receive all that Christ has for you! Be sure to ask your mentor to sign the Certificate of Completion of Mentoring № 1. You are now ready to move on to Mentoring № 2, "Keys to a Successful Spiritual Life."

You are also ready to become a mentor for someone using the materials of Mentoring № 1. You're not alone on the road! Your mentor or home group leader will always help you on the path of serving another person.

And here the question arises, are you ready to dedicate your life to serving other people?

Let's take a look at what Scripture tells us about serving others:

1 Peter 4:10 *Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God.*

Romans 12:11 *Do not lag in zeal, be enthusiastic in spirit, serve the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 12:7 *To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the benefit of all.*

Who is called to be a minister in the church?

- ☐ Special people (Priesthood)
- ☐ Those who know a lot and have a religious education
- ☐ Every born-again Christian
- ☐ It is difficult to answer this question



Thus, the Bible clearly states that every believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to serve others and bring good to the common cause of Jesus Christ. One of the most powerful verses in the Bible says that every member of the body must act:

Ephesians 4:16 *From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love.*

And now, if you agree with the Word of God and are willing to dedicate your life to serving others, let us pray:

LORD Jesus – I make a decision to dedicate my life to serving others. Help me on this path and show me the person I am called to serve. Amen.

There are no "members" in the church of Jesus Christ. You will not find such a concept in the New Testament. In the Body of Christ, all members serve God. Moreover, those people who will not use their God-given gifts can come to the following result:

Read the parable of the talents in *Matthew 25:12-30*.

Let's talk about the sacrament or the breaking of bread. In the Bible, this phenomenon is called the Lord's Supper.

It is called communion because through this act of faith we become partakers of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, offered for you and me.

John 6:51-57 *(New English Translation) I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." Then the Jews who were hostile to Jesus began to argue with one another, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "I tell you the solemn truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood resides in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so the one who consumes me will live because of me.*

When Jesus spoke these words of life, many people did not understand Him. But God reveals it to us so that we may become partakers of His life and partakers of His Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 11:23-30 *(New English Translation) For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread, and after he had given thanks he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, every time you drink it, in remembrance of me." For every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. For this reason, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. A person should*

examine himself first, and in this way let him eat the bread and drink of the cup. For the one who eats and drinks without careful regard for the body eats and drinks judgment against himself. That is why many of you are weak and sick, and quite a few are dead.

The Lord’s Supper is open to all of God's children who have dedicated themselves to the Lord and the service of His Body! And participation in the breaking of bread will always bring closeness to Christ and the filling of our lives with His power!

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION MENTORING № 1 "TOUCHING HEARTS"

Fully completed the program of the course "Touching Hearts"

TEACHER _____

DATE " ____ " _____

Scriptures to Memorize

Week 1 1 John 4:10 In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.	Week 2 John 6:28-29 So then they said to him, “What must we do to accomplish the deeds God requires?” Jesus replied, “This is the deed God requires – to believe in the one whom he sent.”	Week 3 1 John 1:9 But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness.
Week 4 Matthew 6:6 But whenever you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.	Week 5 Matthew 22:36-37 “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus said to him, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’	Week 6 John 1:12 But to all who have received him – those who believe in his name – he has given the right to become God’s children

Week 7 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.	Week 8 John 16:7-11 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I am going away. For if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong concerning sin and righteousness and judgment – concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.	Week 9 Ephesians 6:10-17 Finally, be strengthened in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Clothe yourselves with the full armour of God so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. For this reason, take up the full armour of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand. Stand firm therefore, by fastening the belt of truth around your waist, by putting on the breastplate of righteousness, by fitting your feet with the preparation that comes from the good news of peace, and in all of this, by taking up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.
Week 10 Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;		