

Soul Winning 101 - Disciple Making Class

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

Matthew 22:37-40

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.

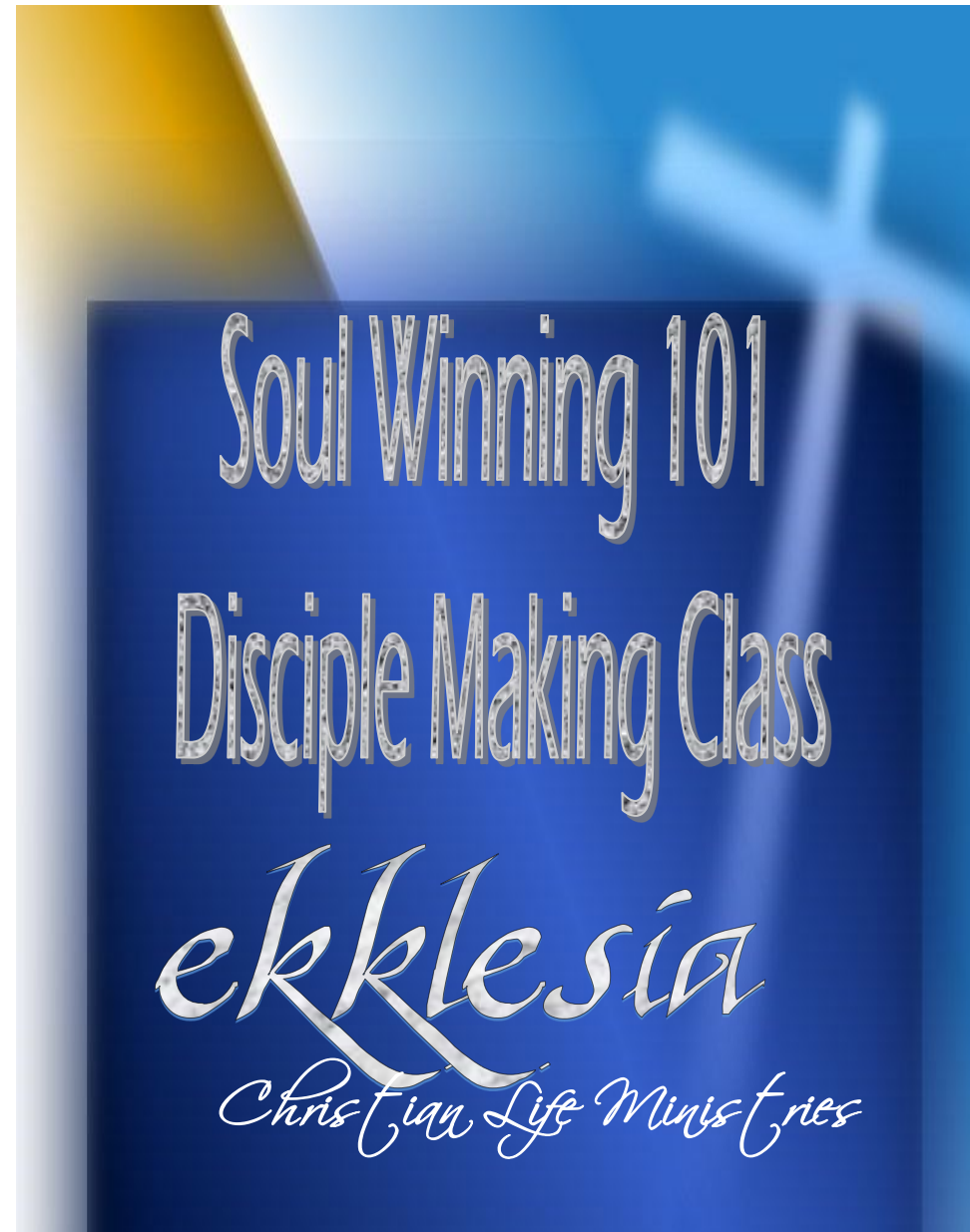
Matthew 28:19-20

ekklesia

A "Called-Out" Family of Believers Reflecting the Image of Christ Jesus

Our Purpose of We the Ekklesia—to exalt the Savior, to equip the saints, to evangelize the lost and to extend the love of Christ.

Ekklesia (pronounced ek-klay-see'-ah) is The Greek word used in the Bible for church, which actually means "assembly" or literally "called out ones." It is made up of the two Greek words, EK—"out of," and KALEO—"shall be called."



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Stephan Kirby, Pastor

What does it take to make a great church? Is it the building? It's location? How about versatility? Maybe a loud Holy-Ghost filled preacher? Or is it good music? With a make your hand - clap, feet stamping Praise and Worship Team or choir? No, I believe it takes God's people, focused on God's Word, Willing to work according to God's Plan.

It is sad to say many are focused on the wrong things and are going to church looking for answers only to find themselves leaving the same way. Then there are those who still don't know Christ or want to know Christ because of the bad taste that Hypocritical Christians have placed in their mouths.

So what needs to happen to for Ekklesia to become a great church? We have to do what God's Word tells us to do.

Two Great Scriptures

There are many passages of scripture that best describes what the church is to be and do, two statements by Jesus summarize it all: the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

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The Great Commandment was given by Jesus in response to a question. One day, Jesus was asked to identify the most important command. He responded by saying, "Here is the entire Old Testament in a nutshell. I'm going to give you the Cliff Notes summary of God's Word. All the Law and all the Prophets can be condensed into two tasks: Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself."

loss for whom he went to the cross.

- Matthew 4:19 (Jesus calls us to be "fishers of men.")
- Matthew 5:16 (Our good works point others to God.)
- Acts 1:8 (Jesus empowers us to be his witnesses.)
- Acts 4:20 (We cannot help sharing what we have seen and heard of Christ)
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 (We are ambassadors of the kingdom of God)
- Colossians 4:5 (We are to make the most of opportunities with outsiders.)
- 1 Thessalonians 2:8 (We share both the gospel and ourselves)
- 2 Timothy 2:2 (God's Word is meant to be passed along.)
- Philemon 6 (We are to actively share our faith.)
- 1 Peter 3:15 (People may recognize our faith and ask why we have such a hope)

7. Service

Serving God by serving others is something that grows out of our love for God and thank fullness for what God has done for us. It is servanthood (something that grows out of love and gratitude), rather than involuntary servitude.

Jesus had a clear mission 'For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). It is a mission he desires his followers to carry out, too Everyone who wants to live for him carefully listens for his call to serve others, as the following verses reflect

- 1 Corinthians 15:58 (We are to give ourselves fully to God's work)
- Galatians 5:13 (We are to serve one another in love.)
- Ephesians 2:10 (God has prepared good works for each of us to do)
- Colossians 3:17,23 (We do all for the Lord and his glory.)
- 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (We should never tire of doing what's right.)
- Hebrews 9:14 (We are saved to serve the living God.)
- James 1:27 (We are to look after orphans and widows.)
- James 2:26 (Faith without works is dead.)
- James 4:17 (We sin when we knowingly neglect God's work.)
- 1 Peter 4:10 (We are to use our spiritual gifts to serve others.)

- Psalm 119:18 (We can pray that God will open our eyes to his Word)
- Psalm 139:23-24 (We can pray that God will search our hearts and lead us)
- Matthew 6:5-15 (Jesus taught his disciples how to pray)
- Luke 5:15-16 (Jesus made prayer his priority)
- Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16 (We can confidently approach God)
- Philippians 4:6 (We can bring all our requests and thanks to God)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (We are to keep praying always)
- 1 John 5:14-15 (If we pray according to God's will, he grants our requests)

5. Fellowship

The church is a community of fellow sinners saved by the grace of God and called to walk alongside and help each other. God wants us to be in relationship with one another, to rejoice and weep with one another, and to "spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24), as these verses illustrate:

- Psalm 122:1 (There's joy in going to the house of the Lord)
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (Two are better than one)
- Acts 2:42 (We learn and grow in community with one another.)
- Romans 12:15 (We rejoice and weep with others.)
- 1 Corinthians 1:9 (We have fellowship with God.)
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 (We are interdependent members of one body.)
- Galatians 6:2 (We carry one another's burdens.)
- Ephesians 4:12 (God's leaders prepare us for works of service.)
- Hebrews 10:24-25 (God works through us when we meet together)
- 1 John 1:3 (We have fellowship with one another)

6. Witness

A witness is a person who tells others what he or she has seen or heard. Jesus and his disciples would be witnesses: The same is true for his disciples today. We are his witnesses, and he uses us to share his Good News with the helpless, hopeless, hurting, and

A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church!

Later, in some of his last words to his disciples, Jesus gave the Great Commission to them and assigned them three more tasks: Go make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey everything he had taught.

Every church is defined by what it is committed to, so we heard of this slogan: "A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church" This will be a major part of Ekklesia's focus

These two passages summarize everything we strive to do at Ekklesia Christian Life, if an activity or program fulfills one of these commands, we do it. If it doesn't, we don't. We are driven by the Great Commandment and the Great Commission Together; they give us the primary tasks the church is to focus on until Christ returns.

The Five Purposes of the Church

Purpose #1: Love the Lord with all your heart

The word that describes this purpose is worship. The church exists to worship God. How do we love God with all our heart? By worshiping him! It doesn't matter if we're by ourselves, with a small group, or with 100,000 people. When we express our love to God, we're worshiping.

The Bible says, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Matt. 4:10). Notice that worship comes before service. Worshiping God is the church's first purpose. Sometimes we get so busy working for God; we don't have time to express our love for him through worship.

Throughout Scripture we're commanded to celebrate God's presence by magnifying the Lord and exalting his name.

Psalm 34:3 (NASB) says, "O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together." We shouldn't worship out of duty; we should worship because we want to. We should enjoy expressing our love to God.

Purpose #2: Love your neighbor as yourself

The word we use to describe this purpose is ministry. The church exists to minister to people. Ministry is demonstrating God's love to others by meeting their needs and healing their hurts in the name of Jesus. Each time you reach out in love to others you are ministering to them. The church is to minister to all kinds of needs: spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical. Jesus said that even a cup of cold water given in his name was considered as ministry and would not go unrewarded. The church is to ". . . equip the saints for the work of ministry" Eph. 4:12 NRSV).

Unfortunately, very little actual ministry takes place in many

churches. Instead, much of the time is taken up by meetings. Faithfulness is often defined in terms of attendance rather than service, and members just sit, soak, and sour.

*As Christians we're called to **be-long**, not just to **believe**.*

Purpose #3: Go and make disciples

This purpose we call evangelism. The church exists to communicate God's Word. We are ambassadors for Christ, and our mission is to evangelize the world. The word go in the Great Commission is a present participle in the Greek text. It should read "as you are going." It is every Christian's responsibility to share the Good News wherever we go. We are to tell the whole world of Christ's coming, his death on the cross, his resurrection, and his promise to return. Someday each of us will give an account to God regarding how seriously we took this responsibility.

The task of evangelism is so important; Christ actually gave us five Great Commissions, one in each of the gospels, and one in the book of Acts. In Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-49, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8 Jesus commissions us to go and tell the world the message of salvation.

Evangelism is more than our responsibility; it is our great privilege. We are invited to be a part of bringing people into God's eternal family. I don't know of a more significant cause to give one's life to. If you knew the cure for cancer, I'm sure you would do everything you could to get the news out. It would save millions of lives. But you already know something better: You've been given the Gospel of eternal life to share, which is the greatest news of all.

As long as there is one person in the world who does not know Christ, the church has a mandate to keep growing. Growth is not optional; it is commanded by Jesus. We should not seek church growth for our own benefit, but because God wants people saved.

2. New Life in Christ

At the moment of salvation we became "new creations." As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "the old has gone, the new has come." Yet God continues to work in us, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, to make us more and more like Jesus. These verses will help the disciple understand what God has done and is doing and how God wants his children to live each day:

- Matthew 22:37-39 (We are to love God and love others.)
- John 10:10 (Jesus came to earth so that we might have abundant life)
- Romans 8:29 (God is at work in us, making us Christ like)
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 (We are new creations in Christ)
- Galatians 5:22-23 (As Spirit led believers, we bear godly fruit)
- Ephesians 2:8-9 (We are saved by God's grace, not by our works)
- 1 John 2:6 (We are to walk as Jesus walked)

3. The Bible

The Bible is God's revelation to mankind. It reveals much about God and us. Through the Bible we are invited into a vital relationship with God. God's Word is of immense value to Christians as it teaches, rebukes, corrects and shows us how to be righteous—and thus is worthy of examination and memorization, as the following verses reflect:

- Deuteronomy 6: 6-9 (God's commands are to permeate our lives)
- Psalm 1 2-3 (We flourish when we delight in God's Word)
- Romans 1:1-6 (God's Word reveals his salvation plan.)
- 2 Timothy 2:15 (God's Word is to be rightly handled.)
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (God's Word thoroughly equips us for life.)
- Hebrews 4:12 (God's Word judges our thoughts and attitudes)
- James 1:22 (We are not only to listen to God's Word; we are to obey it.)
- 2 Peter 1 21 (God's Word is inspired by the Holy Spirit)

4. Prayer

Prayer is simply talking With God as we would with anyone we love and trust. Prayer is essential to a vital relationship with God. We bring our hopes and fears to the Lord and can be sure they are heard if we are not hiding sin in our hearts. These verses help us to see why prayer must be our priority and how we are to pray

Sharing the basic tenets of the faith is an appropriate way to begin a mentoring relationship. This can be achieved by memorizing key Bible verses, prayer, and other relevant activities, such as sharing faith and designing appropriate Bible studies.

Peer Co-Mentoring

In a co-mentoring relationship both partners mentor each other. They identify with the apostle Paul, who didn't consider himself as having "arrived" but felt the urgency to press on in the faith (see Philippians 3:12-14).

The relationship of Paul and Barnabas best illustrates peer co-mentoring. At times the Lord used Barnabas to spur Paul, and at other times he used Paul to encourage Barnabas.

Such a side-by-side relationship provides growth, support and accountability to both individuals. It is a friendship based on trust and open sharing through which the best of each person is enhanced and each is held accountable.

Discipleship Focus on Seven Essentials

It's important to ensure that everyone in this “Ekklesia” is firmly grounded in the basics. The biblical pattern for establishing people in their faith is discipleship. The following seven essentials will help you to build discipling relationships with new and undisciplined Christians in your fellowship:

1. Salvation and Assurance

In the beginning of your relationship with a disciple, take the opportunity to confirm his or her faith commitment and understanding of salvation so he or she can say without hesitation, 'I know that I have eternal life.' The following verses emphasize that salvation is not earned or deserved but a gift from God, who sent his Son out of his unfathomable love for us:

- John 3:16 (God loved us so much he sent his Son.)
- John 5:24 (We will not be condemned.)
- John 10:27-29 (Nobody can take us away from God.)
- Acts 4:10-12 (Our salvation is found only in Jesus.)
- Romans 3:23; 6:23 (We all deserve death for our sins.)
- Romans 5:8 (Jesus died for us while we were still sinners.)
- Romans 8:35-39 (Nothing can separate us from God's love.)
- 1 John 1:9 (if we confess our sins, we are forgiven.)
- 1 John 5:13 (God's Word assures us we have eternal life.)

Purpose #4: Baptizing them

In the Greek text of the Great Commission there are three present participle verbs: going, baptizing, and teaching. Each of these is a part of the command to "make disciples." Going, baptizing, and teaching are the essential elements of the disciple making process. At first glance you might wonder why the Great Commission gives the same prominence to the simple act of baptism as it does to the great tasks of evangelism and edification. Obviously, Jesus did not mention it by accident. Why is baptism so important to warrant inclusion in Christ's Great Commission? I believe it is because it symbolizes one of the purposes of the church: fellowship—identification with the body of Christ.

As Christians we're called to belong, not just to believe. We are not meant to live lone-ranger lives; instead, we are to belong to Christ's family and be members of his body. Baptism is not only a symbol of salvation; it is a symbol of fellowship. It not only symbolizes our new life in Christ, it visualizes a person's incorporation into the body of Christ. It says to the world, "This person is now one of us!" When new believers are baptized, we welcome them into the fellowship of the family of God. We are not alone. We have each other for support. I love the way Ephesians 2:19 is phrased in the Living Bible: "You are members of God's very own family... and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." The church exists to provide fellowship for believers.

Purpose #5: Teaching them to obey

The word we commonly use to refer to this purpose is discipleship. The church exists to edify, or educate, God's people. Discipleship is the process of helping people become more like Christ in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This process begins when a person is born again and continues throughout the rest of his life. Colossians 1:28 (NCV) says, "We continue to preach Christ to each person, using all wisdom to warn and to teach everyone, in order to bring each one into God's presence *as a mature person in Christ*" (italics added).

As the church we are called not only to reach people, but also to teach them. After someone has made a decision for Christ, he or she must be disciplined. It is the church's responsibility to develop people to spiritual maturity. This is God's will for every believer. Paul writes: "... 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" (Eph. 4:12b-13).

Purpose #5: Teaching them to obey (continued)

If you examine the earthly ministry of Jesus, it is apparent that he included all five of these elements in his work (for a summary see John 17). The apostle Paul not only fulfilled these purposes in his ministry, he also explained them in Ephesians 4:1-16. But the clearest example of all five purposes is the first church at Jerusalem described in Acts 2:1-47. They taught each other, they fellowshiped together, they worshiped, they ministered, and they evangelized. Today our purposes are unchanged: The church exists to edify, encourage, exalt, equip, and evangelize. While each church will differ in how these tasks are accomplished, there should be no disagreement about what we are called to do.

Ekklesia's Purpose Statement

At Ekklesia we use four key words to summarize Christ's five purposes for his church.

- Exalt: We celebrate God's presence in worship
- Equip: We though God's Word prepare God's family for fellowship
- Evangelize: We communicate God's Word through evangelism
- Extend: We educate God's people and demonstrate God's love through discipleship and service

These key words, representing our five purposes, have been incorporated into our mission statement, which reads as follows:

Ekklesia's Purpose Statement

Our Purpose of We the Ekklesia – to exalt the Savior, to equip the saints, to evangelize the lost, and to extend the love of Christ.

There are three important distinctive I want you to notice about Ekklesia's purpose statement. First, it is stated in terms of results rather than in terms of activity.

At Ekklesia, we identify the results we expect to see coming from fulfilling each of the five purposes of the church. For each result we can ask questions like: How many? How many more than last year? How many were brought to Christ? How many new members are there? How many are demonstrating spiritual maturity? What are the signs of maturity we look for?

What Jesus accomplished through two types of small groups (the traditional small group and a "huddle group of three") is being realized today through church-based small groups. It's a proven strategy for genuine disciple-making.

In a small group, something special takes place that cannot happen elsewhere. A small group of caring individuals offers a safe environment in which people can focus on the Word; ask questions; share joys and struggles; know and be known; love and serve one another; and, as James 5:16 says, "confess ... sins to each other and pray for each other." It's a safe place where Christians can "work out [their] salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

Whether in a community care group, men's group, women's group or Sunday school class, everyone in the congregation should have a point of connection with the body through a small group.

One-to-One

Often when God uses us to lead a person to Christ, he also uses us to help that person become established in the faith. This happens best in a one to one relationship in when a mature Christian helps a new Christian grow spiritually.

The relationship between Paul and Onesimus, a runaway slave who may have become a believer through Paul's ministry, is an apt example of this type of relationship.

In one-to-one discipleship, the key is to build a foundation by focusing on the basic tenets of the faith. Memorizing key Bible verses and praying for each other are also important.

Mentoring

A Christian mentor is an experienced person who now desires to invest his or her experience and values in the next generation of Christians.

These relationships in the Bible best illustrate the goals of mentoring: Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Naomi and Ruth, and Paul and Timothy.

Plan of Discipleship

Disciples are learners or followers. Being one of Jesus' disciples begins when we trust him for our salvation and continues as we become more like him every day.

Jesus Sets the Example

In his brief public ministry, Jesus emphasized the crucial role of disciple making. Jesus called his disciples into a greater commitment to him when he invited them to serve in ministry alongside him and when he sent them out two by two. He desired that his disciples become vitally united with him, a desire reflected in his words "Remain in me, and I will remain in you" (John 15:4).

It's clear from verses such as Romans 8:29, 2Corinthians 3:18, and Philippians 1:6 that Jesus is committed to his followers' spiritual formation. He transformed curious crowds and self-interested individuals into devoted disciples, and he continues to do so today through his followers who know the importance of disciple-making.

One Step Closer to Christ

Jesus gave his followers the mandate to make disciples. He wants to use modern day disciples to help others become fully devoted followers of Christ. This intention is clearly stated in his Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

How to Make Disciples

To be intentional about discipleship in our church, we will study the following ways discipleship generally occurs in congregations. Remember, it's not the pastor's responsibility to personally disciple each individual but, as Ephesians 4:12 says "to prepare God's people for works of service." Therefore, we inspire a vision in Ekklesia to both reach the lost and establish Christians in the faith.

Methods of Discipleship

Small Groups

Jesus chose the Twelve who walked with him and learned not only what he taught but who he was. They knew one another well. Jesus selected three of them for special instruction and intimacy; his "inner circle" consisted of Peter, James and John. Jesus poured himself into them and taught them what it means to follow him.

How many have been equipped and mobilized for ministry? How many are fulfilling their life mission in the world? These questions measure our success and force us to evaluate if we are really fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

Second, I want you to notice that Ekklesia's purpose statement is stated in a way that encourages participation by every member. People must be able to see how they can make a contribution toward the goals of this church. The mission is stated in a way that everyone can not only believe in it—they can participate in it. If our statement doesn't allow individual participation, very little will ever get done.

Third, and most importantly, notice that we've arranged the five purposes into a sequential process. This is absolutely crucial. To be a great church we must be driven by our purposes and our purposes must be put into a process. That way they can be acted on every day. Every purpose statement needs a process to fulfill it; if not, you simply have a theological statement that sounds good but produces nothing.

Sharing God's Plan of Salvation through the People of Ekklesia

One of the most rewarding experiences Christians have is the opportunity to tell others how to begin a personal relationship with God's Son, Jesus Christ. This first part of this section, "God's Plan of Salvation," is designed to be placed in front of someone with whom you are sharing your faith. You can use it to lead him or her through the questions and Scripture passages toward a faith commitment to Jesus. The second part of the section "Plan of Discipleship" provides ideas for helping new Christians grow in their faith.

God's Plan of Salvation

God promises forgiveness and eternal life to anyone who asks. Jesus Christ, through his death on the cross and resurrection three days later, has already paid the price for our sins.

Our Relationship with God

Through Sin, Humans Have Separated Themselves From God

Though we like to think of ourselves as basically good, we're deceiving ourselves if we claim we haven't sinned (Romans 3:23). Fortunately, Jesus came to help people who have sinned (Mark 2:17).

- What would you say to someone who was obviously sick but refused to go to a doctor?

How is that like someone who sins but refuses to seek forgiveness?

The Way Back to God Is Through Jesus Christ, God's Son

A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the only way back to God (John 14:6). Forgiveness, or salvation, cannot be earned; rather, it is a gift offered to everyone (Titus 2:11) to bridge that separation from God.

- Have you ever received a gift you didn't earn?
- Were you surprised? Uncomfortable? Joyful?

Why would God offer such a wonderful gift?

To Be Forgiven, We Must Admit We're Going the Wrong Way.

We must ask God to forgive our sins, and we must choose to turn to God's way (Acts 20:21).

- Do you fear that you've done something so terrible that God won't forgive you?
- What major decision has changed the way you live?
- How did that decision affect you?

Jesus Died on the Cross to Provide Salvation

Jesus' death and resurrection provided the only way, to restore our relationship with God. To receive salvation and eternal life, we must trust in Jesus' sacrifice for our sins and confess him as Lord (John 3:16; Romans 10:9).

- Have you ever trusted someone fully? Explain
- What would it be like to know someone who loved you enough to die for you?

Salvation Through Jesus Restores Our Relationship With God

When we ask Jesus to be our personal Savior, we receive the Holy Spirit. He lives within the believer, gives power to live a Christian life (Romans 8:2,6), and provides strength to withstand trials and temptations.

- What would it be like to have a personal relationship with God?
- What would it be like to have God's help every, day?

God Has Done It All to Provide Salvation for Us

To receive eternal life, all we have to do is accept in faith what God has already done for through Jesus (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- Would you be willing to consider accepting the salvation God is offering?

What keeps you from making a faith commitment to Jesus right now?

Scriptural Answers to Common Questions

- How do I know God wants me to accept his gift of salvation? Luke 15:3-7
- Is salvation really, a part of God's plan for my life? 1 Thessalonians 5:9
- What does it mean to be spiritually reborn? John 3:1 —7
- How do I know God will really forgive me? Psalm 103 2-4, 1 John 1 9
- How should I ask God for forgiveness? Psalm 51
- After I have accepted the gift of salvation, what kinds of things does God expect of me? Psalm 15; Ephesians 4:1-3 . Don't I need to straighten my life out and stop sinning before I can receive salvation? Romans 5:8

Additional Scriptures

Salvation: Acts 16:31; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 5:7-9

Unconditional Commitment to Christ: Luke 9:57-62

Belief in Christ: John 6:28-29; 10:38; 12:44; 14:11

Repentance: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9

Baptism: Matthew 3:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:11-12

Forgiveness: Acts 10:43; 13:38; Ephesians 1:7

Holy Spirit: John 14:26, 16:13; Acts 2:38-39; 11:15-16

Eternal Life: John 3:15-16,36; 5:24; 6:40; Romans 6:23; 1 Timothy 1:16