

# FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE

"A practical, biblically based tool for equipping World Christians to successfully transition from the campus culture to the graduate culture and to lay a foundation to labor for a lifetime."

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## PURPOSE OF THE FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE WORKBOOK

1. To introduce you to different aspects of the Christian world view so you will be better equipped to fulfill the Great Commission in every area of your life as a steward of the gospel as well as a steward of the unique gifts and opportunities God has given you.
2. To provide you with a practical tool for study and discussion of the topics you will be faced with during the transition from the campus to the world.
3. To assist you in formulating a clear plan bridging you from the campus culture to the graduate culture.

Colossians 1:28-29

*"So, naturally, we proclaim Christ! We warn everyone we meet, and we teach everyone we can, all that we know about Him, so that, if possible, we may bring every man up to his full maturity in Christ. This is what I am working at all the time, with all the strength that God gives me."* (Phillips)

## FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE WORKBOOK GUIDE

### I. How To Use This Workbook

1. The workbook can be used as a study guide for individuals or small groups who wish to work through this on their own.
2. It can be used with a group of Seniors on a Discipleship Team who desire to study and discuss these topics together with assistance.
3. Ideally, this information can supplement other training opportunities found in the local church and/ or on the campus.

## II. How To Teach The Material

1. The "Perspective" section at the beginning of each chapter can be used as an introduction to the topic.
2. The "Bible Study" introduces in a limited fashion some of what Scripture says about the particular issues and can be viewed as a stepping stone to deeper study. The study itself can be given as an assignment for the next group meeting along with any feedback from the "Discipleship Journal" articles.
3. The "Discussion Questions" section has been designed to facilitate group interaction and assist in developing personal convictions. It is important to understand that the goal of this workbook is not to answer all these questions for you, but rather for you to consider, study and pray over the issue you will be faced with as you graduate.
4. The "Recommended Reading" list has been compiled from Christian leaders in many areas of business, ministry, and family life. This is an excellent resource for developing individual or group projects for further study.
5. The "Personal Transition Plan" is the application step to determine additional information to gather, questions to ask, action steps to take and issues to trust God with.

The material is secondary. The Holy Spirit is primary to working through the Word of God and then your life as a leader to teach and model God's living message.

## PERSPECTIVE ON FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE

Within this decade, our generation has yet to see a military conflict like Operation Desert Storm. This operation was a massive challenge to mobilize thousands of people and equipment to the Middle East in order to free the people of Kuwait.

Today there is a great challenge to mobilize hundreds and thousands of Christians from the college campus into the battle zones of life in order to free men's souls for God's Kingdom.

The transition from the campus culture to the community culture is a unique challenge that students often face with much stress, limited preparation, and an incomplete perspective. The Foundations For Life workbook has been designed to be a helpful "mobilization" tool, providing you with perspective and resources and preparing you to make this crucial transition.

### What is Mobilization?

The process of making a successful transition from the campus world to the graduate world.

How to be Mobilized:

- A. Develop a godly perspective on life and this world by understanding from God's word His purposes and plans for His children.
- B. Discern God's unique plan for your life by understanding how He has gifted, prepared and equipped you to serve Him.
- C. Locate role models, perspective, and information to help you successfully transition into these areas:
  - a. Church
  - b. Career
  - c. Marriage and Family
  - d. Community
- D. Develop a personalized transition plan that will help you take specific steps upon graduating to land you firmly on your feet in the world.

One of the challenges today for graduates is to understand a balanced Christian world view, which communicates that all aspects of our lives are of value to God. Therefore, we are an offering to God, "holy and pleasing to Him". Ministry is not simply one aspect of our lives, but it is an outgrowth of Christ-likeness in all areas.

R.C. Sproul comments in Battle for Our Minds: Worldviews in Collision,

. . . the Christian Gospel is not the narrow single-issue concern of "evangelism," as it is often misunderstood in our time. Paul in Athens (Acts 17) was challenging his audience at the very point of their underlying disobedience - their false and ungodly philosophy of life. As the base for spreading the good news of redemption, members of God's kingdom still can and must speak to the entire spectrum of our religious, social, professional, civic and cultural institutions. Unless our Gospel impacts all areas of the community - and not just our personal and private

lives - the Christian message will increasingly become a paper tiger to be scorned and pitied, but not respected. We have taken upon ourselves the yoke of obedience to represent effectively our Lord in the world. Each of us must be about our Master's business in the particular sphere of our divine calling.

After Christ gave the "Great Commission" to His disciples in the gospels, the rest of the New Testament is given to show how to integrate that mission into all of life. The letter to the Ephesians can be viewed as a commentary on how the Great Commission is to be lived out. The various topics which are discussed in this workbook grow out of the major themes of Ephesians.

### **Major Themes of Ephesians:**

Chapter 1-2	Spiritual Blessings in Christ Made Alive in Christ
Chapter 3	Paul defends his ministry to Gentiles The Mission of the Church
Chapter 4	Unity in the Body of Christ
Chapter 4-5	Challenge of Godly Living Great Commission carried out through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Church</li><li>b. Marriage</li><li>c. Children</li><li>d. Vocation</li><li>e. Spiritual Warfare</li></ul>

### **COLLEGIATE CULTURE SHOCK?**

The actual transition from college to the marketplace is very similar to the transition a person makes when leaving one culture and going to a new culture. Some of the elements of this transition include: high levels of stress, inadequate preparation, and the need for perspective and encouragement in a new environment.

"Culture Shock Cycle," illustrates what happens for a two-year, cross-cultural assignment. The principle of culture shock also applies after graduation, getting a new job, marriage, having children, or with any major life change. Understanding the normal occurrence of this cycle can lessen the shock involved in the transition.

(Notice there is an upward cycle at first when excitement and anticipation are high, then the first downward dip occurs and the "honeymoon" is over. It is important to use much discernment in decision-making during the first 6-8 months because your emotions and lifestyle are not yet stable.)

It has been said, "Don't resist change, it is God's agent of growth." As you are properly exposed to new and different experiences and people, perspective is developed. Perspective breeds maturity, and maturity breeds godliness.

### **IMPORTANT!**

This material can be useful in preparing any college student for the transition from the campus to the world. However, the very best thing a college student can do to insure success in this world is to have a personal relationship with the living God who created the world.

This is possible by surrendering your life to Jesus Christ and trusting in His total and free payment for your sins through His death on the cross. His resurrection proved that not only is He alive but He is life and He is the giver of life.

Once you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and are growing daily, only then is a foundation for true success established. A life built on that foundation will stand the test of trials and time. This kind of person will also understand it is a lie that says real life is found in living for yourself. Instead he or she will be motivated by the love of Christ to serve Him and to build His kingdom. It is our prayer that each of you will always find yourself in the safest and most satisfying place. A Christian can be right in the middle of God's plan for his or her life. Hopefully this material will assist you in discovering exactly what that place is!

"He is no fool who gives what he can not keep to gain what he can not lose."--Jim Elliott

## PERSPECTIVE ON WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST

As Christians, we are in a special relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Once we are convinced of God's love and wisdom, we are thankful for how He made us. This is the first step in accepting ourselves because we know that God created us and He can give us profound insight into ourselves.

God is very concerned with your development. He knows what you are meant to be. Any father is pleased when his children develop well, and God, our heavenly Father, is just as pleased when His children conform to the plans He has for us. He has created you as an unique individual for very specific reasons. In His love, He wants to assist you in developing and blooming. Discovering and appreciating "who you are" is just as important as knowing that you are "in Christ".

As you grow in understanding of your position in Christ, you can move further to know "who you are" and your unique role in His Kingdom work. This truth can be a strong motivation to investigate your spiritual gift, birth order, talents, temperament, and interests to function in areas of strength for your good and God's glory.

# WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST BIBLE STUDY

What is the overall purpose of understanding who you are in Christ? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

God is more concerned with who we are becoming than what we do. The whole chapter of Psalm 139 is a classic passage about who you are. What insights are especially meaningful to you?

Read Hebrew 4:13 and Jeremiah 17:9-10. How is it that God knows us better than we know ourselves?

## **Comparing yourself with others**

Read 2 Corinthians 10:12, which speaks about how we compare and contrast ourselves with others - something that is very human but very unwise.

- a. If you compare yourself with others, why do you think you do it?
- b. What are usually the results of this comparing?
- c. If necessary, what can you do to to change this habit?

## **Your strengths and limitations**

- a. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, in which Paul describes a limitation God placed on him. How did Paul react when God did not remove this limitation?
- b. Did Paul's handicap make him feel restricted in his service for God? How could you thank God for a limitation He has allowed in you life, whether it is physical, intellectual, an aspect of you back ground, or something else?
- c. What purpose for evaluating ourselves did Paul give in 2 Corinthians 13:5?

## **My Appearance**

- a. What foundational truth about my body and my appearance is given in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20?
  
  
  
  
  
- b. How should this truth affect how I think about my appearance?

## **Personalizing your Mission in Life**

It is good to know that we all can play a significant part in God's plan for the world. How does Mark 13:34 (in context with Jesus' parable) illustrate this principle that each of us has an individually assigned task from God?

What perspective does 2 Peter 1:3 give in relation to our growth and development?

## **Practicing your Spiritual Gift**

Your mission in life will be expressed differently than others because of the spiritual gift you have, so be careful not to compare yourself with others. What practical and personal insights can you gain from the following verses about spiritual gifts? (Be sure to read these verses in context)

- a. Romans 12:6-8
  
  
  
  
  
- b. 1 Corinthians 12:4
  
  
  
  
  
- c. Ephesians 4:7-8
  
  
  
  
  
- d. James 1:17
  
  
  
  
  
- e. 1 Peter 4:10

## **Process of Finding your Mission in Life**

### **1. Look Up!**

Discovering God's mission for your life (beyond salvation) means becoming acquainted with God and His word. Reading God's Word prayerfully will help you discover your mission in life in a personal way. What are some meaningful benefits of God's word in relation to who you are? (Psalm 119)

### **2. Look Around!**

What are the needs in your world that continue to get your attention? What do you see in your world that needs doing? What passages come to mind when thinking about recognizing the needs of others?

### **3. Look In!**

After looking to the Lord and looking at the world around you, look within yourself. Look at your heart. Your unique experiences in life have sensitized you to particular needs in the world. Look over Psalm 139 again and write down some possible reasons God has allowed you to have the background, parents, and experiences that you do.

### **4. Look at your Talents!**

After identifying a mission you could get excited about, you need to determine specifically what you can do to advance that mission. Find ways to be involved that will capitalize on the talents you possess. The next logical step is that you would make the connection between your mission in life and your actual career. Using your talents in your mission will enhance your ability to work joyfully and generously.

## **WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What is your basic understanding of your position in Christ?
2. If you had the power to change anything about yourself, would you use that power and what would you change? How could you turn a “flaw” into an unique expression of God’s love for you and a reminder to be humble? (Psalm 139)
3. What spiritual needs do people around you have that motivate you strongly to meet those needs? (This can help you determine your spiritual gift)

## **PROJECTS**

1. Take the “Spiritual Gifts Test” at the end of this chapter to assist you in discovering, developing, and using your gift. Based on your spiritual gift, what are some practical ways you can use it to build up the body of Christ?
2. What is your basic temperament, and what practical ways does this influence your walk with God, relationships with others, career focus, and personal habits? (The DISC -Performax Test is an excellent diagnostic tool to discover your temperament)
3. What talents\interests do you have, and how can they be used to glorify God? Look at your heart and the unique experiences of your life to discern what needs you could meet in your world.
4. Knowing yourself is critical to discovering God's plans for you. List 50 observations about yourself that would describe who you are to a total stranger.
5. Your parents probably know you better than anyone else. Set up a time with them to get their input on your strengths, weaknesses, talents, and temperament.
6. Many colleges and universities have career development centers which have tools, tests, and re sources that can be helpful in discovering more of who you are.

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST**

1. Calvary Road (Roy Hession)
2. Children Of The Living God (Sinclair Fergusen)
3. Fearfully And Wonderfully Made (Brand and Yancey)
4. Going Deeper (J. Sidlow Baxter)
5. Hinds Feet In High Places (Hannah Hurnard)
6. His Image, My Image (Josh McDowell)
7. Holiness, Truth And The Presence Of God (Francis Frangipane)
8. Inside Out (Larry Crabb)
9. Jesus Loves Me (H.L. Roush, Sr.)
10. Men Made New (John R. Stott)
11. Our Sufficiency In Christ (John MacArthur)
12. Search For Significance (Robert S. McGee)
13. Self-Esteem (Ray Burwick)
14. Spirit-Controlled Temperaments (Tim LaHaye)
15. The Danger Of Self-Love (Paul Brownback)
16. The Pleasures Of God (John Piper)
17. There Were Two Trees In The Garden (Rick Joyner)
18. Transforming Grace: Living Confidently In God's Unfailing Love (Jerry Bridges)
19. Victory Over The Darkness (Neil Anderson)
20. What Color Is Your Parachute? (R. N. Bolles) (Note: This book will actually walk you through your talents, interests, etc. and makes a great personal development project!)



## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Who Are You"**

1. What convictions do you have?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?

## PERSPECTIVE ON CHARACTER

Character is the unique quality of life that sets a follower of Christ apart from those in the world. The strongest influence in our society is spirit-filled people who have Christ-like character expressed through various relationships. Developing character is a lifelong process, one that God is committed to carry out in you. Discernment is needed in this process so that you can perceive what God is doing in your life and learn significant “life” lessons.

As character is being developed, you must learn how to recognize the difference between character weaknesses and sin. Many times what is thought of as a character weakness can actually be sin. A positive way to view weaknesses is to discern what character strengths are taken to the extreme. An example of this could be a person who seems to be impatient, but actually may be taking the strength of efficiency to the extreme. However, it is important to remember that impatience can also be sin. Discernment is greatly needed in this area.

Again you can see that there is an interesting principle about praise as it relates to Character. When we praise God for His specific character qualities, He manifests Himself to us through these qualities, allowing us to experience that aspect in our own lives. For example, when we praise God for His faithfulness, He manifests Himself to us in faithfulness and we become more faithful.

# CHARACTER BIBLE STUDY

1. What is the overall purpose of developing Christ-like character? (1 Corinthians 10:31)
2. According to 2 Corinthians 1:12, how should Christians conduct themselves in the world?
3. What does 2 Corinthians 5:17 say happens to your character when you are “in Christ”?
4. The classic passage on Christian (Kingdom) character is the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11. What character quality is mentioned and what is the result of that quality?

Character Quality	Result
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

5. We can easily evaluate our progress spiritually based on what we are doing or not doing rather than focusing on the inner works of godly character. According to the following verses, what are some of the motives for developing character?
  - a. Psalms 4:3
  - b. 1 John 3:3
  - c. Philippians 2:15

6. What is the significance of the progression in 2 Peter 1:5-9 as it relates to character? What are the results of having or not having those qualities?

7. How does Ephesians 2:10 illustrate the truth that God is more concerned with who we are becoming than what we do?

8. What does 1 Timothy 4:12 have to say to younger Christians in regard to how we relate to others?

9. According to Deuteronomy 7:6, why did God choose us?

10. Because we are God's children, what should our response be? (Colossians 3:12)

11. What character quality will cause God to give you grace? (1 Peter 5:5)

12. Who ultimately is responsible for developing character? (1 Thessalonians 4:9)

13. What are some of the results for children whose parents have godly character? (Psalms 37:26)

14. Besides the perfect example of Christ, what is another standard for developing character according to Psalms 119:1?

15. Read over 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and write out which requirements for elder are character-related and which ones are skill-related. What is significant about the unequal list?

Character:

Skill:

16. What is one of the best ways to develop character, besides walking with God, according to Proverbs 13:20?

## **CHARACTER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What are your character strengths and weaknesses? List them. Identify the weaknesses which are actually sin, and the ones which are strengths taken to the extreme.
2. What character quality would you want to have in your life more than anything else?
3. How does Christ exemplify this quality in His life as recorded in the Gospels?
4. What does Proverbs have to say about this quality? Commit a key verse to memory.
5. Using the list of qualifications for elders in I Timothy 3:1-13, evaluate your own maturity and develop a plan for your growth. Taking the same list, ask two respected mentors to evaluate you and to assist you in implementing your personal plan.
6. Based on Titus 2:1-8, who do you know that could teach you these qualities and skills?

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON CHARACTER**

1. A Long Obedience In The Same Direction (Peterson)
2. Be A Leader People Follow (George Barna)
3. Becoming A Woman Of Excellence (Cynthia Heald)
4. Calvary Road (Roy Hession)
5. Charity And Its Fruits (Jonathan Edwards)
6. Desiring God (John Piper)
7. Disciplines Of A Godly Man (R. Kent Hughes)
8. Holiness (J.C. Ryle)
9. Holy Sweat (Tim Hansel)
10. Honesty, Morality, Conscience (Jerry White)
11. I Surrender (Pat Morley)
12. Improving Your Serve (Chuck Swindoll)
13. Intimate Friendship With God (Joy Dawson)
14. Keeping Your Ethical Edge Sharp (Doug Sherman)
15. The Example Of Jesus (Michael Griffith)
16. The Man In The Mirror (Pat Morley)
17. The Mark Of The Christian (Francis Schaeffer)
18. The Quest For Character (Chuck Swindoll)
19. What's On Your Mind (Melvin Carothers)
20. Who You Are When No-One's Looking (Bill Hybels)
21. True Spirituality (Francis Schaeffer)
22. Words That Hurt, Words That Heal (Carole Mayhall)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Character"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?

## PERSPECTIVE ON CHURCH

The Church or Body of Jesus Christ is not just another option but a living organism ordained by God. Our relationship with God as His Church is compared to the most intimate of human relationships, that of husband and wife. Much like being married, complete commitment to the local church is foundational to relating properly.

Every Christian should have a proper relationship with the local church. Relating properly to the local church will not automatically happen but will be the result of obedience in the Christian's life. This is one of the main ways God ensures healthy growth for every Christian and ensures healthy ministry in the world. In order to appreciate the church and function properly within it, you must understand the various purposes for the local church and your place in the body of Christ. As you have healthy fellowship with other believers, the many gifts of the Holy Spirit will be displayed in such a way that the body will become Christ to you, " . . . for He is the head of the body — the Church."

# CHURCH BIBLE STUDY

## **The Mission Of The Church**

What is the overall purpose of the Church? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

What means has God has ordained to be His messenger of the gospel to the world? (Ephesians 3:10)

What was one dominant characteristic of the young churches?

- a. Acts 8:4
- b. Colossians 1:5,6
- c. I Thessalonians 1:8

Ephesians 4:11-16 speaks of the equipping ministry of the local church.

- a. Who are the equippers? (verse 11)
- b. What are you to be equipped to do? (verse 12)
- c. What are the characteristics of the members of such a church? (verses 13-16)
- d. How is the body of Christ built up? (verses 15,16)

## **Structure of The Church**

According to 1 Corinthians 3:11, what foundation should all doctrine and practice be built on?

What parallel does God use in the following verses to illustrate the purposes of the Church and why?

- a. Ephesians 5:23
- b. 1 Peter 2:5

According to Romans 12:4-8, how can diversity cause unity?

How does I Corinthians 12:14-20 illustrate that we all are important and must play our unique part in making up the whole?

## Function of The Church

What testimony will a unified church have to non-believers? (John 17:21, 23)

Fellowship and accountability are two important things which will make a successful transition. According to Hebrews 10:24-25, how can the church facilitate this need?

What criteria does Jesus have for who His brothers and sisters are? (Matthew 12:50)

The mistake that Rehoboam made can easily be made by younger Christians today because of the way our society and churches structure their programs. What does I Kings 12:8 say about Rehoboam's mistake and what can you do to prevent the same thing from happening to you?

Titus 2 gives a list of what various groups must be taught. According to this passage, what are some things that an older Christian (spiritually and chronologically) can teach you?

Acts 2:42 lists the activities of the first New Testament church. List the four activities and the purpose of the activity today.

Church Activity	Purpose of Activity
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4

The church is an excellent place to find mentors, what does Proverbs 13:20 say about this?

## Warfare of The Church

Who is the prime enemy of the Church? (Ephesians 6:11-13)

In the Corinthian church, what were some of the internal conflicts? (I Corinthians 3:1-3)



## CHURCH DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were asked, “What is the purpose of The Church?”, what would you say?
2. How is the commitment to the body of Christ like the commitment a spouse makes to a mate?
3. What are some of the benefits of the local church?
4. What are practical ways you can effectively be a part of a local church for God’s glory?
5. What are some practical ways you can encourage and minister to your pastor?
6. What are the main criteria you would have for a “good” church before you would consider to becoming a member?
7. Review the list on the next page and discuss how the church and campus ministry are different (not wrong). What are the implications of this on the transition?
8. Based on Titus 2, who is someone that could teach you the things in this passage?

## CAMPUS MINISTRY AND CHURCH MINISTRY

When a missionary leaves his home culture and goes to a new culture, he must realize that the way things are done there are not wrong but simply different. This same attitude can make the transition from the campus culture to the church culture much smoother and more effective.

The following list illustrates the aspects in which the local church is different (not wrong) from the campus ministry. Gaining an understanding of these elements will bring a new perspective and appreciation for God’s bride, the Church.

Few Established Structures	Established Structures
Homogeneous Make-up	Heterogenous Make-up
Target-Oriented	Community-Oriented
Narrow Purpose/Focus	Broad Purpose/Focus
Short-Term Involvement	Long-Term Involvement
Visible, High Commitment	“Hidden” Commitment
High Momentum	Low Momentum
Much Accountability	Little Accountability

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON CHURCH**

1. Beyond Church Growth (Robert E. Logan)
2. Church Without Walls (Jim Peterson)
3. Encouragement (Larry Crabb)
4. God's Forgetful Pilgrims (Michael Giffiths) (especially Chapter 7)
5. Living In Christ And Church (Ed Clowney)
6. The Church Before The Watching World (Francis Schaeffer)
7. The Disciple-Making Church (Hull)
8. The Glorious Body Of Christ (Abraham Kyper)
9. The Hallelujah Factor (Jack Taylor)
10. Unleashing The Church (Tillapaugh)
11. User-Friendly Churches (George Barna)
12. What Christ Thinks Of The Church (John R. Stott)
13. What The Bible Teaches About The Church (John Balchin)
14. Women Encouraging Women (Lucibel Van Atta)
15. Your Spiritual Gift Can Make Your Church Grow (C. Peter Wagner)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Church"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?

## PERSPECTIVE ON MARRIAGE

Marriage is one of two divinely ordained institutions of God in existence today. The relationship of husband and wife is compared to the most intimate of divine relationships, God and His bride, the Church.

Preparation for a Christ-centered marriage is one of the best investments you can make in your life. Understanding the Biblical purposes of marriage is a good start in laying a foundation for a solid and life-long relationship.

(Note: In God's design of the family, He intends that the wife is the man's helpmate and thus, all the principles found in the Career and Money sections of this workbook apply to her as well. They are a team working together for the same purpose.)

# MARRIAGE BIBLE STUDY

## **Purposes of Marriage**

What is the overall purpose of marriage? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

What do the following verses say about the purposes of marriage?

Fulfill God's Plan Together  
Genesis 3:19-20

Companionship For One Another

- a. Matthew 19:5
- b. Genesis 2:24

Fruitfulness

- a. Genesis 1:28
- b. Psalm 127:3
- c. Malachi 2:16

Pleasure with Self-control

- a. Ecclesiastes 9:9
- b. I Corinthians 7:5

Illustration of God's Relationship with Man

- a. Ephesians 5:32
- b. Matthew 16:24

## **Preparation for Marriage**

How could Matthew 6:33 be one of the best perspectives to cultivate while preparing for marriage?

Whose responsibility is it to find a spouse? (Genesis 2:22)

How could the application of 2 Timothy 5:2 protect a single person from defrauding someone or even committing fornication before marriage?

What does Proverbs 18:22 have to say about a man who has “found” a wife? (Note: The Hebrew word here implies “stumble upon” rather than “diligently seeking”)

How can the exhortation of Hebrews 13:4 be fulfilled before marriage? After marriage?

Singleness is a great time for ministry and personal development. What is one thing that could hinder this and harm a future marriage? (Proverbs 31:3)

### **Practice of Marriage**

What are some daily examples which would illustrate the principle of 1 Corinthians 11:11?

What ways could ministry as a single person change when one gets married based on Matthew 19:6?

Everyone is under authority. What are the benefits of this principle in the marriage relationship? (1 Corinthians 11:3)

What are the practical benefits of the statement in Genesis 2:18?

What are some ways you could express the standard of Romans 7:2 in your marriage?

Study Ephesians 5:21-33 and answer the following questions:

- a. Why is there freedom in submission for both husband and wife?
- b. Verse 33 tells the husband to \_\_\_\_\_ his wife.
- c. Verse 33 tells the wife to \_\_\_\_\_ her husband.
- d. Why is it so important for a husband to memorize and meditate on Scripture? e. What practical implications does “leave” have on a newly married couple?

How would the example of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11 be an excellent model for our attitude in marriage?

### **Husband's Role**

What are some of the benefits of God's Word for a man before and after marriage? (Proverbs 7:1-5)

What are the factors in 1 Peter 3:7 that would hinder a husband's prayers?

What are some of the reasons God does not want a husband to break faith with his wife? (Malachi 2:14-16)

In the list of qualifications of an elder in 1 Timothy 3, which ones are character qualities and which ones are skills?

Character:

Skills:

### **Wife's Role**

Based on 1 Peter 3:1-6, how can a Christian woman make herself beautiful?

Proverbs 31 is a classic passage on the woman who is "a wife of noble character." Many younger women do not realize that this woman is an older woman, but an insight in verse 23 confirms that she is. It says, "Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land." If he is older, chances are good that she is older as well. What are some of the character qualities and skills that a younger woman can develop as she aspires to be like this Proverbs 31 Woman?

Character:

Skills:

What are some of God's desires for women revealed in Titus 2:4-5?

What is crucial to successful submission? (Colossians 3:18)

## **MARRIAGE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why is the best candidate to be married the person who has the least need to be married?
2. What areas of your life need to mature before you can be the kind of person someone could marry?
3. Why would your parents (regardless of whether they are Christians or not) be some of the best people to assist you in the marriage preparation process?
4. What do you think would be the benefits of pre-engagement and pre-marriage counseling from a Biblical perspective?
5. Are your role models for marriage healthy? Why or why not? How can you get exposure to some Godly couples?
6. Why do you think most marriages today are not surviving?
7. How can a Christian couple function as one so that their marriage can be an effective ministry to others?
8. What are some of the things you would like your marriage to be characterized by?
9. From this study, write out the roles of the husband and then of the wife. (Problems seem to come when these roles are not known or simply neglected.)
10. Husband, what are some practical ways you can show love for your wife? Wife, what are some practical ways you can show respect for your husband?

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON MARRIAGE**

### **Premarital Reading:**

1. Before You Say I Do (Norman Wright)
2. Letters To Phillip; Letters To Karen (Charlie W. Shedd)
3. So You're Getting Married (Norman Wright)

### **Marriage Reading:**

1. Becoming A Woman Of Excellence (Cynthia Heald) - for women
2. Best Friends (Conrad Smith)
3. Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem (Dennis and Barbara Rainey)
4. Creative Counterpart (Linda Dillow) for women
5. Hedges (Jenkins)
6. If Only He Knew (Gary Smalley) for men
7. Lonely Husbands, Lonely Wives (Dennis Rainey)
8. Love Is A Decision (Gary Smalley)
9. Love Life (Ed Wheat)
10. Man And Woman (Larry Crabb)
11. Marriage Takes More Than Love (Jack and Carole Mayhall)
12. Opposites Attack (Jack and Carole Mayhall)
13. The Christian Family (Larry Christianson)
14. The Marriage Builder (Larry Crabb)
15. The Mystery Of Marriage (Mike Mason)
16. The Myth Of The Greener Grass (J. Allen Peterson)

## MARRIAGE SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Evidence of growing devotion to Christ in both partners	Ephesians 4:12-13 Luke 8:14
2. Consent of both sets of parents	Proverbs 23:22; Ephesians 6:1-3
3. Means of economic livelihood	Proverbs 24:27; 1 Timothy 5:8
4. Commitment to a Biblical solution to problems	II Chronicles 26:5; Romans 5:3-5
5. Similarity in family background	Genesis 24:3-4; Genesis 26:34
6. Willingness and desire for communication	Proverbs 15: 4, 23; Proverbs 12:44
7. Clearly defined goals regarding life purpose	Matthew 6:33; Colossians 1:28
8. Understanding of and commitment to true love	1 Corinthians 13; Ephesians 5:25-33
9. Demonstration of a spirit of forgiveness	Matthew 6:12; Ephesians 4:32
10. Witness of a clear conscience	Proverbs 28:13; 1 Peter 4:15,16, 21
11. Freedom from moral impurity	1 Thessalonians 4:3-6; Ephesians 4:17-19
12. Acceptance of yourself	Psalms 139:13, 14; Ephesians 2:10
13. Harmony with authority	Romans 13:1-2; 1 Peter 2:13-14
14. Commitment to Biblical financial principles	Matthew 6:24; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Timothy 6:6-10
15. Sensitivity to feelings and desire of others	Philippians 2:1-8; Matthew 7:12
16. History of emotional stability	James 1:5-8; Philippians 4:11-13; Matthew 7:24-27

## Personalized Transition Plan - "Marriage"

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?



## PERSPECTIVE ON FAMILY

One of the most powerful influences on your life and on society as a whole is family. The family unit is the backbone of the church, nation, and ministry. From it grows the greatest expression of God's love. Today the Christian family unit is becoming a rare breed and is under attack. The Secular Humanist agenda has crept into the church and is doing tremendous damage. Much courage will be needed to be victorious in this important battle. This gives us all the more reason to understand the family as God intended it to be.

The way we relate to our parents will have a profound impact on how we will relate to our own children. Just like in marriage, you must have a clear understanding of God's purposes for the family and how it fits into God's overall plan.

One of the greatest legacies a person can leave on this earth is a godly heritage. The potential for impact as well as personal fulfillment and joy is incredible but does not come without a price. Take the time now to lay the foundation to build a home that loves and serves the Lord together.

## FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Children**

What is the life-long responsibility of children to their parents found in Exodus 20:12?

What are the practical benefits of this promise?

What is one of the most effective and yet most neglected ways a Christian young person can discern God's will? (Colossians 3:20)

Why is this true?

What are the implications of 1 Timothy 5:8 as it relates to family relationships?

### **Roles and Responsibility of Father and Mother**

What is the overall purpose of the family? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

The Ten Commandments and the "Shema," found in Deuteronomy chapters 5-6, constituted the central focus of Jewish behavior and practice. Jesus restated this same concept in what we now know as the "Greatest Commandment". In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, what is the application of the "Greatest Commandment" found in this passage?

What does Deuteronomy 4:9 suggest as one thing grandparents can do with their grandchildren?

What is a warning and challenge given to fathers in Ephesians 6:4?

How can the requirements for church leaders found in 1 Timothy 3:4-5 and Titus 1:6 be a key to successful ministry?

What are some of God's desires for mothers revealed in Titus 2:4-5? Why does a young wife need to be trained to love her husband and children?

What are the possible financial and social benefits of a mother not working outside the home found in Proverbs 31:27?

## **Children in the Family**

In a day when many consider children to be a bother and a liability, what is Jesus' attitude about children? (Matthew 19:13-14)

Children are considered a blessing in Scripture. What is the significance of the comparisons used in Psalms 127:3 and Psalms 128:3?

What is a result of building a family on God's principles found in Proverbs 17:6?

## **FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What are some of the issues that you possibly have not resolved with your parents?
2. What do you feel is a child's responsibility to his or her elderly parents?
3. Should a couple get married if they are not ready for the responsibility of children?
4. In what ways is our society working against building a godly family and how can these challenges be met?
5. What are some of the things you would like your family to be characterized by? What goals can you set to reach these desires?
6. When does a child (who is commanded to obey parents) become an adult (who is commanded to honor parents)?

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON FAMILY**

1. A Mother's Heart (Jean Fleming)
2. A Mother's Legacy (Jeanne Hendricks)
3. Always Daddy's Girl (Norman Wright)
4. And Then I Had Kids... (Susan Yates)
5. Dad, The Family Coach (Dave Simmons)
6. Dare To Discipline (James Dobson)
7. Growing Wise In Family Life (Charles R. Swindoll)
8. How To Keep Your Kids On Your Team (Charles Stanley)
9. Love Is A Choice (Himfelf, Minirth, and Meier)
10. Missing From Action (Weldon M. Hardenbrook)
11. Parenting Isn't For Cowards (James Dobson)
12. Point Man (Steve Farrar)
13. The Blessing (Gary Smalley and John Trent)
14. The Christian Family (Larry Christianson)
15. The Effective Father (Gordon McDonald)
16. The Family (John MacArthur, Jr)
17. The Language Of Love (Gary Smalley and John Trent)
18. There's No Place Like Home (Gordon McDonald)
19. What Is A Family? (Edith Schaeffer)
20. What The Bible Says About Child Training (Fugate)

**Personalized Transition Plan - "Family"**

1. What convictions do you have?
  
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
  
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
  
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
  
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
  
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?

## PERSPECTIVE ON CAREER

God is a worker and work got its start with God. Work is an expression of the Creator who designed His Creation with purpose and meaning in mind. He wove into the very fabric of your human nature a capacity for work. Mankind's fall into sin introduced pain and toil to the work place. This leads some people to conclude that work in and of itself is bad. God placed a curse on the earth, not on work itself. You find the effects of sin in work as you do in every aspect of creation but work is not necessarily bad. Work is good and has value when it is done with the right motives and for Godly purposes.

Unfortunately, not enough Christians understand work in light of God's purposes for work and therefore find themselves unfulfilled and unhappy in their jobs. God does not have a hierarchy of important work which starts with pastors and missionaries. There are no extra "external benefits" for working in a "Christian Ministry." God's character can be expressed in many vocations.

The topic of career has some special considerations for women magnified by the fact that there is great confusion in today's culture on the roles God intended for women. God will call the majority of women to the noble task of being wives and mothers. This is one of the most effective means of how God uses women to fulfill the Great Commission. The Bible and history are full of examples of this fact.

# CAREER BIBLE STUDY

## **Five Purposes of Work**

1. According to I Corinthians 10:31, how is work is a gift from God to bring Him glory?
2. How does Jesus' example in Mark 10:45 illustrate that through work we serve one another?
3. Through work, your needs and the needs of your family are met. How does the fulfillment of 1 Timothy 5:8 indicate one's spiritual condition?
4. What is a powerful motivation to earn money found in Ephesians 4:28?
5. How is work an act of worship? (Colossians 3:22-24)

## **How God Sees Work**

In Genesis 1:1, how is work an expression of the Creator who designed His Creation with purpose and meaning in mind?

Did work come before or after the fall according to Genesis chapters 2 and 3?

How could the fact found in Isaiah 65:21-23 change your attitude about work on earth?

What are God's desires for us in regards to work found in Ecclesiastes 5:18?

## **Practical Implications Of Work**

What is God's preventive medicine for burnout and workaholism found in Exodus 20:8-11?

What encouragement does John 15:18-25 give to those who are in a marketplace system that may not apply or respect God's standards?

What are some of God's parameters for women regarding career as revealed in Titus 2:4-5?

How does the perspective of Matthew 6:33 assist us in keeping work in its proper perspective?

Both non-Christians and Christians need to be inspired to moral excellence. How is a Christian in the marketplace like the items in Matthew 5:13-15?

What implications would Proverbs 24:27 have on marriage as it relates to career?

Why is the welfare system contrary to Scripture and destructive to individuals, families, and nations? (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

What is an effective means of evangelism on the job found in Proverbs 22:29?

### **CAREER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How does the fact that God gave work to man before the fall affect your view of work? Ask some of your friends the question, “Did work come before or after the fall?”.
2. How does the fact that we will work in heaven change your attitude about work on earth? (Isaiah 65:21-23)
3. How does your career focus reflect God’s character? (Examples: Doctor=Healing, Teacher=Teaching, Farmer=Provider)
4. Why do you think that God desires for you to enjoy labor as a reward?
5. How do you connect or reconcile your career with fulfilling God’s purposes for you, your family, your church, and the world?
6. Why is it harmful to consider some careers more “spiritual” than others?
7. If you are still in school, how can you cultivate the mind-set of worship and excellence now in your classes before you start your career?
8. What would be the physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual benefits of taking the Sabbath rest seriously in your life?
9. Think through the “Three Biblical Models for Putting God’s Kingdom at the Center of your Work Life” (next page) and consider the various ways you can have a ministry through your career.

### **Three Biblical Models for Putting God’s Kingdom at the Center of your Work Life**

You are not limited to just one of these models your whole life, God may use you in all three models by the time your career is over.

#### **1. Mission in your Occupation**

You may work in an organization that is not dedicated to accomplish God’s agenda on earth, but you may be strategically positioned to accomplish your mission on the job. God enabled men like Joseph, David, Daniel and many others to rise in business and government service positions which allowed them to influence and advance His Kingdom through their occupations. This method could well be the most needed and perhaps most strategic model in today’s world. God may be calling you to be used in a similar way. The Marketplace may be the most un-reached people group in our country!

#### **2. Occupation support your Mission**

Many people cannot or do not desire to raise support in order to have a ministry. Many countries around the world are closing the door to traditional missionaries. Because of these two realities, many laborers are seeing success by using their occupation to support their mission. In the New Testament, Paul was called to be an Apostle, but he didn’t want to be a financial burden on the early church. So Paul learned a trade—tentmaking. Paul was able to provide for his needs by making tents and still fulfill his mission of teaching and preaching. This concept is usually thought of as “Tentmaking” for overseas but it works in North America also.

#### **3. Mission as Occupation**

God has chosen some to make their living exclusively from preaching the gospel. God has set aside men to be the leaders of the church and equipped them with the necessary gifts and training to do so. There is such potential for older and mature believers to influence younger Christians with their exemplary life in Christ. The Pastoral Epistles (I-II Timothy, Titus) outline the qualifications and duties of these leaders.

*Regardless of which model you may be involved with now, a connection must be made between your work and God’s work or there will be frustration and limited to no impact for Christ.*

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON CAREER**

1. Business Through The Eyes Of Faith (Eby and Roels)
2. Christians In The Marketplace (Bill Hybels)
3. How To Succeed Where It Really Counts (Sherman and Hendricks)
4. Keeping Your Ethical Edge Sharp (Doug Sherman)
5. Keeping Your Head Up When Your Job Gets You Down (Doug Sherman)
6. Love Your Work (McKenna)
7. Strategy For Living (Ted Engstrom)
8. Survival For Busy Women (Emilie Barnes)
9. The Great Niche Hunt (Frahm and Rinehart)
10. Your Job: Survival Or Satisfaction (Jerry White)
11. Your Work Matters To God (Sherman and Hendricks)
12. What Color Is Your Parachute? (R. N. Bolles)
13. Why America Doesn't Work (Chuck Colson)
14. Why Work? (John Bernbaum and Simon Steer Baker)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Career"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?



## PERSPECTIVE ON MONEY

The way we view and handle money is an excellent indicator of the priorities of our heart. Jesus makes it very clear that faithfulness in the area of finances determines much about a person's spiritual condition.

Thankfully, scripture is very specific in giving instructions to us on how to be stewards of the resources He has entrusted to us for our good and His purposes. An understanding of the biblical purposes and uses of money will bring confidence and strong conviction to our lives.

The issue of money does not have to be intimidating and fear producing if we are willing to commit to God's principles of finances in His word. God shows Himself strong on behalf of those who trust Him; He is honored by faith and many times money is the means by which we can learn faith.

# MONEY BIBLE STUDY

What is the overall purpose of money? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

The goal of how a Christian views and handles money is to have financial freedom. The following verses explain the three main ways this is accomplished.

1. Giving
  - a. Giving to God (tithes and offerings) (Malachi 3:10)
  - b. Giving to the poor (the necessities of life) (Proverbs 19:17)
  - c. Giving to Christians (Romans 12:13)
2. Receiving
  - a. Receiving through diligent labor (II Thessalonians 3:12)
  - b. Receiving through creative resourcefulness (Proverbs 31:13)
  - c. Receiving through answers to prayer (Philippians 4:6)
3. Managing
  - a. Building sales resistance (Proverbs 20:14)
  - b. Looking for the best buys (Proverbs 31:16)
  - c. Being prompt in paying bills (Proverbs 3:28)

How could the following verses illustrate one key to financial freedom, especially in our society?

- a. I Timothy 6:8
- b. Ecclesiastes 5:10

There are basically four Biblical purposes of money. What insights can you get from these verses?

1. To Provide Basic Needs
  - a. Matthew 6:26, 28-30
  - b. I Timothy 6:6-8
  - c. Hebrews 13:5

2. To Confirm Direction - God's Will

- a. Psalm 37:7
- b. I Timothy 6:9
- c. James 1:3-4

3. To Give to Christians - Church: Widows, Poor, Missionaries.

- a. II Corinthians 8:14
- b. Romans 12:13
- c. II Corinthians 9:6

4. To Illustrate God's Power - Mock the gods of this age.

- a. Malachi 3:10
- b. Acts 5:12-14
- c. Psalm 50:15

What in Scripture are we told to seek after because it is greater than riches? (Ecclesiastes 7:12)

Is money evil? (1 Timothy 6:10)

What does Proverbs 13:11 say about saving money?

How can someone hate God without even realizing it? (Matthew 6:24)

What are some of the guidelines we have for tithing from:

- a. 1 Corinthians 16:2?
- b. Malachi 3:8-10
- c. Deuteronomy 14:22-23
- d. Proverbs 3:9-10

The things you cannot touch are said to be eternal; the things you can touch are temporal. How does Hebrews 13:5 illustrate this?

Can a person simply decide how much they will make or is that even under the control of God? (James 4:13)

Read 1 Timothy 5:8. In context of chapter 5, make some observations about how money influences family responsibilities.

How does the Parable of the Sheep and Goats challenge us to develop a sacrificial lifestyle? (Matthew 25:31-46)

## **MONEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Why has the issue of money possibly been intimidating to you?
2. Evaluate your view and practice of money based on the three factors of financial freedom and the four purposes of money.
3. What are the benefits of using a budget? Do you know how to establish one?
4. Is there a difference between tithing and giving sacrificially?
5. What are your convictions about debt and borrowing?
6. What are some of the justifications a couple may use to come to the conclusion that the wife should work outside the home? What alternatives does the couple have?
7. What are some of the hidden costs for mothers working outside the home? (Example: Time away from children, increased costs for her wardrobe, transportation, food, etc.)
8. What are your convictions about life insurance?
9. What are some Scriptural principles that would influence your saving, investing, and budgeting of money?

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON MONEY**

1. How To Manage Your Money (Larry Burkett)
2. Investing For The Future (Larry Burkett)
3. Master Your Money (Ron Blue)
4. Money And Your Marriage (Russ Crosson)
5. The Coming Economic Earthquake (Larry Burkett)
6. The Complete Financial Guide For Young Couples (Larry Burkett)
7. The Grace Of Giving (Stephen Olford)
8. Your Finances In Changing Times (Larry Burkett)
9. Your Money: Frustration Or Freedom (Howard Dayton)
10. Your Wealth In God's World (John Jefferson Davis)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Money"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?

## PERSPECTIVE ON MAKING GODLY DECISIONS

Decision-making can be a difficult process, especially during a transitional time in life when there are so many decisions to be made. Although there are no easy answers concerning how to make godly decisions, there is a multitude of wisdom from God's Word which can provide beneficial promises for you. Guidance is an aspect of God's character and He desires you to make proper decisions more than you do. Because He is your Father and Lord, He is committed to guide you in His ways.

Just as God is in complete control over the whole universe, He is intimately associated with all your concerns and opportunities. It must be said that it involves a very poor, superficial, and un-Biblical view of God to say that He does not and cannot concern Himself with the details of life, cannot answer prayer, give relief in emergencies, or intervene miraculously in behalf of man.

Decision-making can either be one of the most dreaded experiences we must go through or an exciting process of growth and personal development, all depending on our knowledge of God's promises about guidance and our view of God's character.

# MAKING GODLY DECISIONS BIBLE STUDY

What is the overall purpose of making godly decisions? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

## **God's Character in Guidance**

According to Psalm 139:1, why should we allow God to be so directly involved in our decisions?

God's grace ("the desire and power to do what is right") allows us to be free to make decisions within His moral will. What reminder of this is given in Galatians 5:1?

## **God's Names and Decision-making**

The names of God represent His character. How can the following names of God relate to decision-making?

Jireh - The LORD will provide (Genesis 22:14)

Nissi - The LORD, my banner (Exodus 17:15)

Rapha - The LORD, that healeth (Exodus 15:26)

Shalom - The LORD is peace (Judges 6:24)

Rohi - The LORD, my shepherd (Psalm 23:1)

Tsidkenu - The LORD, our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

Qaddiskhem - The LORD who sanctifies you (Exodus 31:13)

Shammah - The LORD is there (Ezekiel 48:35)

## **God's Promises about Guidance**

What promises about guidance are found in the following verses?

a. Isaiah 50:7

b. 2 Peter 1:3

c. Psalms 37:34

d. Matthew 25:23

e. Galatians 6:9

f. James 1:17

g. Psalm 32:8

God is ultimately responsible for our perseverance in the Christian life. What promises do we have when we persevere? (James 1:4)

### **Balance Between God and Man's Responsibility in Decision-making**

How do the following passages of Scripture explain the general truth that men do not work independently of God but are controlled by the will of God?

- a. Proverbs 16:1
- b. Proverbs 16:9
- c. Proverbs 21:1
- d. Psalm 135:6
- e. Colossians 1:16-17

What does Philippians 2:12-13 say about divine sovereignty and human responsibility?

### **God's Means of Guidance**

Focus is difficult to maintain but vital for successful decision-making. How could Proverbs 4:25 help you?

What is one of the most effective and yet most neglected ways a Christian young person can discern God's will? (Colossians 3:20)

What did Jesus say in John 15:4 about an important element in successful decision-making?

What attitude is necessary to make decisions which will honor God? (Joshua 24:15)

Why is understanding God's Word so important in decision-making? (Ephesians 4:14; James 1:25)

What does James 1:8 say about a person who does not have faith?

Satan is committed to confusing Christians. What can you do to prevent this from happening? (Ephesians 6:13; 1 Peter 5:8)

What does Matthew 26:41 say about how emotions can make decision-making difficult?

Our spiritual gift has a significant influence on what motivates us to make decisions. How does Romans 12:6 explain this?

What principles could be helpful in Romans chapter 14 as it relates to dealing with people who have different convictions?

## **MAKING GODLY DECISIONS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What are some of the root issues that cause you to possibly be indecisive in decision-making?
2. Have you established an adult-adult relationship with your parents so you are under their chain of counsel or do you still have a child-adult relationship where you are under their chain of command?
3. What method do you use to make effective decisions?
4. What part should counsel play in making decisions?
5. What part should faith play in making decisions?
6. How have you reconciled God's sovereignty and man's will as they both come together to reach man's good and fulfill God's purposes?
7. What personal activities in your life are you not sure are right for you to be taking part in? Use the following page entitled "How To Measure Questionable Activities" to assist you in making some decisions and commitments in that area.
8. What promises about guidance would you like to claim for a decision you are in the process of making?

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON MAKING GODLY DECISIONS**

1. A Passionate Commitment (Crawford Loritts)
2. Discovering God's Will (Sinclair Ferguson)
3. God's Will And The Christian (R.C. Sproul)
4. If God's Will Is So Important Why Can't I Find It? (MacArthur)
5. Knowing God's Will (M. Blaine Smith)
6. Knowing God's Will And Doing It (J. Grant Howard)
7. Knowing God's Will In A Crazy, Mixed-Up World (Tim LaHaye)
8. Living For What Really Matters (Paul Reinhart)
9. Pray With Your Eyes Open (Richard Pratt)
10. Principles Of Conduct (John Murrar)
11. The Rare Jewel Of Christian Contentment (Jerry Bridges)
12. The Sovereignty Of God (A.W. Pink)
13. Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts (Jerry Bridges)
14. When The Squeeze Is On (M. Thatcher)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Decisions"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?



## PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNITY

As the global community continues to get “smaller,” yet there are more people living today than ever before, Christians have a unique opportunity to be salt and light in our world. God wants you to be effective in your personal and family life, but moreover, another part of His plan is that His children would impact the world. Jesus prayed for us that we would be “in the world” not “of the world.” This is a tremendous challenge loaded with pit falls and opportunities to be a witness for Christ.

When community or society is discussed, usually we think of the great need for missionaries to go cross-cultural to hidden people groups. This is definitely a great need yet only few can actually plan on going. The Christian individual and the whole body of Christ have a responsibility to the local communities, governments, and the global community to be a reflection of Christ to them. This will preserve and protect the basic elements of a healthy society as well as draw people to Christ as He is lifted up.

# COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

What is the overall purpose of our involvement in the community? (1 Corinthians 10:31)

In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus gave the “Greatest Commission” ever. How does this lay the foundation for us to fulfill the last commission Christ gave in Matthew 28:18-20?

## **How God works through Church and State Authorities**

“Authority” is viewed by many as a negative concept. What does Romans 13:1-5 have to say about this?

What does Romans 13:2 have to say about those who rebel against authority?

Fear is caused by anticipation of punishment. What does Romans 13:3 say about being free from fear of authority?

What was the basis of Jesus’ bold leadership? (Matthew 28:18)

What responsibilities do we have towards our leaders?

- a. Hebrews 13:7
- b. Hebrews 13:17
- c. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

## **Christians in the World, but not Worldly Christians**

Compromise is like a deadly disease; it can infect you without being noticed unless a strict watch is kept. Secular Humanism is destroying our society and sadly our churches. In Psalm 106:34-39, what mistake did the Israelites make that led to their downfall and could lead to ours as well?

How does 1 Peter 2:11 illustrate for us what attitude we should have in the world?

What happens when Christians live just like the world? (Matthew 5:13)

What does God say about people who choose to be a friend of the world? (James 4:4)

According to 1 John 4:5 and John 3:19, why is it that the world does not listen to the wisdom of Christians?

## **Ministry in the World**

What must happen in the life of a Christian before effective ministry to the world can take place? (1 John 5:4)

What does James 1:27 say is pure and faultless religion?

Godly character will have what result in your community? (Philippians 2:15)

What is the ultimate goal for Christians in the community? (Matthew 24:14) As you live out Christ in your community, what do you need to remember at all times? (1 Peter 3:15)

Why will Christians have persecution and difficulties when they try to influence others in society?

a. John 7:7

b. 1 Corinthians 1:21

c. Galatians 3:22

The book of Romans has inspired many great individual and national revivals throughout Church history. Chapters 1-11 outline some of the great doctrines of the Christian faith. Chapters 12-16 go on to explain how those doctrines can be practically applied in our lives and churches. Read Romans 12:9-21 and list qualities and actions that will influence a community for Christ.

### **COMMUNITY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Beyond evangelism, what do think Christ meant by being “salt and light”?
2. How could you develop personal or family projects to minister to the poor, orphans, elderly, and widows in your community?
3. What can you do to get your church involved in this kind of “Great Commission” ministry?
4. Why do you feel it is important to be aware of local, state, national, and international events?
5. Why is the privilege and responsibility of voting so important?
6. What are some ways you can develop the same ministry focus in your community that missionaries have in their countries?
7. Review the following list below and discuss how the community culture is different from the campus culture. What implications will these differences have in the transition?

### **CONTRASTING THE CAMPUS CULTURE TO TO COMMUNITY CULTURE**

Same Ages	Different Ages
Conceptual Environment	Concrete Environment
One “Language”	Many “Languages”
Same Purpose	Different Purposes
“More Time”	Limited Time

## **RECOMMENDED READING ON COMMUNITY**

1. Community Of The King (Howard Snyder)
2. How Should We Then Live? (Francis Schaeffer)
3. How To Reach Secular People (Hunter)
4. Involvement (John Stott)
5. Kingdoms In Conflict (Charles Colson)
6. One People (John Stott)
7. Reaching Your World (Beth Mainhood)
8. The Secular Saint (Robert Webber)
9. The Universe Next Door (James W. Sire)
10. What Americans Believe (George Barna)

(Note: Groups like Eagle Forum, The Rutherford Institute and Wallbuilders are committed to assisting Christians in the area of begin informed on political issues.)

## **Personalized Transition Plan - "Community"**

1. What convictions do you have?
2. What do you need to give additional study, prayer, exposure and consideration to in order to have a clear understanding of God's perspective and application of His truth in the world?
3. What are the potential traps that you could fall prey to and could keep you from laboring for a lifetime?
4. What action steps do you need to take in order to make a successful transition?
5. What goals do you want to set to accomplish two years after you have graduated?
6. What thoughts, ideas and/or visions do you have about how God could use this area of your life to glorify Himself through you?