

YEAR 1 BOOK 3

# JUNIOR 2

Student Workbook

*Does God care  
about me?*

*Temptations*

*Living out  
my faith?*



**THEME:**

Christian Living (1)

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## Student's Devotional – Don't give in

*"My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent." (Proverbs 1:10)*

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*"A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel."*

**Proverbs 1:5**

Temptation is the urge to do something you know is wrong. Temptations leave you feeling guilty and conned. They are dangerous to your relationship with your loving Father. When you are tempted, just choose to walk away. God promises that He'll provide an escape. Empower yourself with the Holy Spirit and walk away...choose to avoid situations where you'll find yourself face-to-face with those temptations. Sin leads only to more sins. (Proverbs 10:16)

*"Get all the advice you can, and you will succeed; without it you will fail."*

**Proverbs 15:22**

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## YEAR 1 BOOK 3

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4. Gen 6, 18, 39; Dan 1-4
5. Gen 10-17
6. Gen 14; Mal 3; Mk 9-10; Lk 16-17; Mt 26
7. Ps 23; Mt 28-29; 2 Tim 1-4
8. Ex 14 – 20; Num 11 – 14, 16, 20
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12. Mt 12-15; 1 Kgs 21; 2 Kgs 5; Acts 5

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# Christian Living (1)

## UNIT THEMES:

### Unit 1: Christians and Personal Life

In this section, students will be prompted to think of God's love for them, and the need for them to consider God in every aspect of their lives. Through the lessons, they will be reminded of how to lead a Christian life-style, one that is prayerful and joyful.

They will also consider the importance of service to the Lord in their daily lives as well as planning for their future.

### Unit 2: Stewardship

Being Christian is not simply a status in name. A true Christian is one who puts biblical principles into practice in his or her life. He or she will know that it is more important to hold on to the teachings and principles of the Bible than to conform to the world. He or she will not compromise the teachings of God for convenience or gains in this world. As students are at a crucial age where a lot of life-long principles are being forged. It is important that they recognize their special status as God's people.

The Bible also gives very practical teachings about wealth management. For example, in Matthew 19:16-22, Jesus Christ taught the rich young ruler about the need to prioritize God before his own wealth. Our students should also realize that all that they have on earth are gifts from God, and they should freely share those gifts.

### Unit 3: Life's Challenges

God had not meant for His chosen ones to live like hermits, out of touch with the world. In fact, when He first called Abraham, He told him that through him, all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Gen 12:3). Yet, the hardest part about living on earth is actually dealing with interpersonal relationships successfully, and in accordance to God's teachings. In this section, the students will learn some biblical wisdom regarding how to dwell amicably with others.

### Unit 4: Speech

"For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." (James 2:2)

This verse tells it all: Bridling our tongues might well be the hardest lesson to master in our spiritual cultivation. Our world today is full of lies and ungracious words. We have to shine as lights by manifesting good speech in our dealings with people. It is not always easy, but at least, as Christians, we should be consciously trying all the time. The lessons in this section will highlight to the students important pointers about exercising control over the tongue. At the very least, they will be made aware of the importance of bridling this tiny faculty of the body.

## MEMORY VERSES FOR MARCH, APRIL AND MAY

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1. "Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Mt 6:30)
2. "That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col 1:10)
3. "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them.'" (Eccl 12:1)
4. "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom 12:2)
5. "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt 16:26)
6. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth . . . for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Mt 6:19, 21)
7. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me." (Ps 23:4)
8. "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Prov 15:1)
9. "Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do." (Col 3:13)
10. "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." (Jas 1:14, 15)
11. "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." (Eph 4:29)
12. "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned." (Mt 12:36, 37)

## Does God Care About Me?

## Bible Study

Matthew 6:30-33

**1.** What feelings do you think people were having that prompted Jesus Christ to say this?

**2.** Why does Jesus Christ rebuke the people for their lack of faith?

**3.** Why should we tell God about our needs when He already knows what they are?

**4.** What other things could we pursue instead of God's kingdom and His righteousness?

■ God cares for little ones too!

***It is easy to imagine that we're too insignificant or too unworthy for God to pay attention to us, but the truth is, God cares even for the littlest ones!***

→ **Genesis 21:10-20**

1) How was the status of Hagar and Ishmael inferior in Abraham's household?

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2) Whom did Hagar cry out to for help?

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Who else was crying?

\_\_\_\_\_

4) What was the result of young Ishmael's cries?

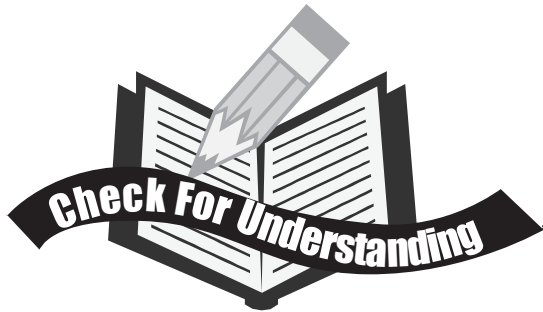
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## Does God Care About Me?

## Bible Study

## Mark 12:41-44

- 1) Was the woman whom Jesus Christ praised an honorable woman, one whom people would pay attention to?
- 2) Why do you think Jesus Christ noticed her?



1.

Hagar and her son's cries in the desert were heard by God. What does this teach you about God's mercy?

2.

What did the Lord Jesus tell us not to worry about in Matthew 6:31?

3.

Zacchaeus was so touched by the love of the Lord Jesus for him that he decided to repent of his wrongdoing. What did he decide to do to show his repentance?

## LUKE 19 :1-10

*Was it surprising to you that Jesus Christ noticed Zacchaeus in the crowd? Why or why not?*

1

*What do you think brought about the repentance of Zacchaeus?*

2

*Why do you think the multitude was upset that Jesus Christ wanted to go to a sinner's house and eat with him?*

3

*What was the Lord Jesus' reply to them?*

4

*Can you think of other examples from the Bible where God looked upon the most unworthy ones of the society?*

5

## Does God Care About Me?

## Life Application

*I mean, the universe is such a big place that our earth is a mere flyspeck in space.  
I have created you.*

*And with all the billions of people crowding our planet, I'm no more significant than a  
grain of sand on one of the ocean's beaches.  
You are my child.*

*And with all the people who've lived in the centuries before me,  
I have known you since before you were born.*

*And all the people who'll live in the years after I'm gone,  
You are precious to me.*

*How could God possibly have time to give me any attention or even notice me? He proba-  
bly doesn't even know I exist!*

*I have created you and you are My child.  
You are as important to Me as anyone who has ever lived.*

*Me? Are you sure you really know I exist?*

*(Author, unknown)*

Does God really know I exist?

How does the author feel about God in this poem?

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How does this writer feel about himself?

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Perhaps you have some of the same doubts as this poet. Do you believe that God really cares for you? If so, how?

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How does He care for even the smallest details of your life?

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# Does God Care About Me?

## Life Application

### ***God's love will not let us go.***

*It is sometimes easy for us to doubt God's love and care for us. Sometimes, we may think God simply doesn't think we're important enough to warrant His attention. Sometimes, when things are not going the way we want them to, we think that God's blessing is not with us. But, the Bible tells us that "all things work for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). The following is a story that carries a powerful message about God's love for us. When we suffer, when we are scarred, God's love could actually be at work, albeit different from what we imagine or expect!*

Some years ago on a hot summer day in south Florida a little boy decided to go for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. In a hurry to dive into the cool water, he ran out the back door, leaving behind shoes, socks and shirt as he went. He flew into the water, not realizing that as he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator was swimming toward the shore.

His mother, looking out the window of the house, saw the two as they got closer and closer together. In utter fear, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son as loudly as she could. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to his mother. It was too late. Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him.

From the dock, the mother grabbed her little boy by the arms just as the alligator snatched his legs. That began an incredible tug-of-war between the two. The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was much too passionate to let go. A farmer happened to drive by, heard her screams, raced from his truck, took aim and shot the alligator.

Remarkably, after weeks and weeks in the hospital, the little boy survived. His legs were extremely scarred by the vicious attack of the animal, and, on his arms, were deep scratches where his mother's fingernails dug into his flesh in her effort to hang on to the son she loved. The newspaper reporter who interviewed the boy after the trauma asked if he would show him his scars. The boy lifted his pant legs. And then, with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "But look at my arms. I have great scars on my arms, too. I have them because my Mom wouldn't let go."

*You and I can identify with that little boy. We have scars, too. Maybe not from an alligator, or anything quite so dramatic, but the scars of a painful past. Some of those scars are unsightly and have caused us deep regret. But, some wounds, my friend, are because God has refused to let go. In the midst of your struggle, He's been there holding on to you. The Scripture teaches that God loves you. You are a child of God. He wants to protect you and provide for you in every way. But sometimes we foolishly wade into dangerous situations. The swimming hole of life is filled with peril — and we forget that the enemy is waiting to attack. That's when the tug-of-war begins — and if you have the scars of His love on your arms be very, very grateful. He did not, and will not, let you go.*

1. What are some things in the world that threaten to drag us away from God and swallow us up, metaphorically speaking?
2. Do you have personal experiences of times when you felt that you were being swept away by things in this world, to the dangerous point of almost losing your spiritual life?
3. Did you feel God's "desperate hands" clinging on to you, to save you? Share this experience with your classmates.



## Does God Care About Me?

## Life Application

**PROBLEM CALENDAR****MONDAY**

Try not to argue with Mom about clothes.

**TUESDAY**

Do not cheat on exams.

**WEDNESDAY**

Get homework done instead of watching too much TV.

**THURSDAY**

Little sister always wants to tag along; she is a nuisance.

**FRIDAY**

All my friends want me to cut class to see a movie.

**SATURDAY**

My friend called and wanted me to go out instead of going to church.

**SUNDAY**

My dad wanted me to help him and I yelled back.

*How God helped me***MONDAY**

We argued, but God wanted me to have patience to listen to my mom and we talked things over at the end.

**TUESDAY**

I goofed off, flunked the exam, God taught me I must study hard.

**WEDNESDAY**

I prayed to God to give me strength to say "no" to temptation.

**THURSDAY**

God helped me to have patience with my little sister.

**FRIDAY**

God helped me explain to them why I have to go to class.

**SATURDAY**

God reminded me to have conviction in my faith.

**SUNDAY**

God helped me to understand my dad's need and not yell back.

# How to Live a Life of Faith

## Bible Study

*True faith is about walking with God all throughout one's lifetime. It is not just a moment of conversion or an occasion such as baptism or receipt of the Holy Spirit. A Christian is characterized by the way he leads his life and the things he does in his daily life. Let us now look at some biblical examples of Christian living.*

*Examples from  
the Old Testament*

**Jacob**

Gen 28:17- 22

*Read the following biblical sections concerning some great people of faith and then summarize what these "saints of old" did in their lives of faith. What would be the modern-day equivalent for you to emulate?*

**Daniel**

Dan 6:4, 5, 10

**David**

1 Sam 30:7, 8

**Ezra**

Ezra 7:10

*Examples from  
the New Testament*

**The Early Believers**

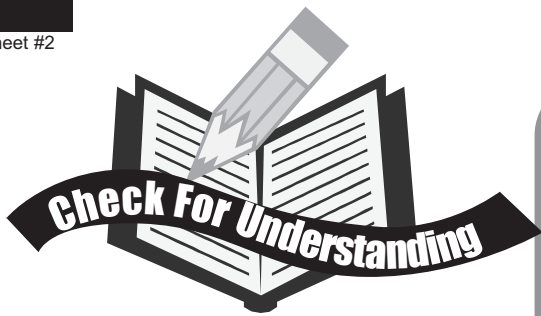
Acts 2:44-47, 8:4 & 17:11

**Paul and Silas**

Acts 16:25

**Peter and John**

Acts 3:1-9



What does it mean to build altars to God?

1.

2.

What do you think Daniel's prayer was about in Daniel 6:10? The Bible records that he gave thanks in his prayer. How could he give thanks when his life was in danger?

3.

What were some of the admirable deeds of the early believers during the time of the apostles?

4.

What do you think were the main reasons why the early apostolic church grew as quickly as it did?

5.

When Paul and Silas were imprisoned, they were able to sing hymns. What do you think was in their minds when they were singing hymns in their prison cells?

# WHEN & how to pray

*The following excerpt is adapted from page 44 of "A New Life in Christ" (part of the "Discipleship Series" copyright 2000 True Jesus Church).*

## A Piece of Advice Concerning Prayer

One brother, John, thus advises: "You should try to pray every day. Prayer is essential for every Christian. When you wake up in the morning, make sure you have a quick prayer before you leave the house. Before bedtime, you should kneel down and pray for at least one minute. I try to squeeze in at least 1 minute of prayer when I wake up and about 5 minutes before I go to bed. Sometimes, I'm really tired out and don't know what I'm praying about, but I feel prayer is a part of my Christian duty. Anyway, I think having a consistent prayer life makes God happy. So, regardless of how busy you are, you should always remember to pray."

## Questions

- 1) **Analyze this piece of advice. Is it good advice?  
What are the good points about this piece of advice?**
- 2) **What do you think John's prayer life is like?  
What do you think his prayer content is about?**
- 3) **What is your prayer life like? What is your ideal life of prayer? How well-matched are the two?**
- 4) **What changes would you make to improve on this piece of advice given by John?**

# How to Live a Life of Faith

## Life Application



*I cannot say "**Our Father**," if I do not demonstrate the relationship in my daily life.*

*I cannot say, "**in heaven**," if I am so occupied with the earth that I am laying up no treasure there.*

*I cannot say, "**Hallowed be Your Name**," if I, who am called by His name, am not holy.*

*I cannot say, "**Your will be done**," if I am questioning, resentful of or disobedient to His will for me.*

*I cannot say, "**On earth as it is in heaven**," if I am not prepared to devote my life here to His service.*

*I cannot say, "**Give us this day our daily bread**," if I am worrying about my livelihood.*

*I cannot say, "**Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors**," if I harbor a grudge against anyone.*

*I cannot say, "**Do not lead us into temptation**," if I deliberately place myself, or remain in a position where I am likely to be tempted.*

*I cannot say, "**But deliver us from the evil one**," if I am not prepared to fight the spiritual battle with the weapon of prayer.*

*I cannot say, "**Yours is the kingdom**," if I do not accord the King the disciplined obedience of a loyal subject.*

*I cannot say, "**and the power**," if I fear what men may do, or what my neighbor may think.*

*I cannot say, "**and the glory**," if I am seeking glory for myself.*

*I cannot say, "**Forever**," if my horizon is bounded by the things of time.*

(Author unknown)

What do we pray about?  
Do we live up to what we pray about?

Most, if not all, of us are familiar with "The Lord's Prayer." We have learnt it by heart and can rattle it off the tips of our tongues without any problem. Yet, how many of us truly look into the content of the prayer? Have we ever cared to examine what the prayer is all about?

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that the Lord Jesus used to teach His disciples when they asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1). Hence, it is surely more than something for us to just memorize and recite. It is an outline teaching us what we should pray about. More importantly, it is a guideline for us in the way we lead our lives.

Let us now look more closely at this prayer. On the left is a poem written as a reflection on the Lord's Prayer.

Continued on next page



I cannot say "Our Father," if I

I cannot say, "in Heaven," if I

I cannot say, "Hallowed be Your Name," if I

I cannot say, "Your will be done," if I

I cannot say, "On earth as it is in Heaven," if I

I cannot say, "Give us this day our daily bread," if I

I cannot say, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," if I

I cannot say, "Do not lead us into temptation," if I

I cannot say, "But deliver us from the evil one," if I

I cannot say, "Yours is the Kingdom," if I

I cannot say, "and the power," if I

I cannot say, "and the glory," if I

I cannot say, "Forever," if I

Author: Write your name

This poem has given us merely one perspective to what the Lord’s Prayer is about. The author applies the Lord’s Prayer to what we should think about and do in our lives. The Lord’s Prayer also teaches us the content of our prayers. For instance, we can pray and meditate upon how to have God’s will done on earth as it is in heaven. We could pray about church progress. We could pray about our own decision-making. We can also pray about our own weaknesses in our character and life-style.

Now, let’s attempt a similar reflection on the Lord’s Prayer as the author of the poem did. Complete the sentence for each line of the prayer to the right. As we write, think about what we should be praying about in our prayers, and what our lives should be like.

## LIVING OUT A LIFE-LONG GOAL

**A goal**

gives us something to try for, a direction to go towards, and a place to end

Healing the blind and ministering to the poor were certainly difficult. But how about accepting the cross? **Jesus Christ wanted to set us free from the bondage of sin.** That means He had to be willing to take our sin and die on the cross. It is clear that these goals were not easy. **Think about the following questions.**

- 1) *Where did Jesus Christ announce His goals?*
- 2) *The people of Jesus Christ's day were not aware of what would happen to Him. What do you think they thought He was claiming that He would do?*
- 3) *Jesus Christ set biblical goals. Christians can set some of the very same goals He set. What goals might a growing Christian pick from the Isaiah passage the Lord Jesus read?*
- 4) *Based on what you remember about the life of Jesus Christ, what were some of the difficulties He had in reaching His goals?*
- 5) *Put a star by the goal you feel was most needed for Jesus Christ's day. Why? Double underline the goal you feel is most needed for the church today. Why?*
- 6) *What does all this tell you about the type of person Jesus Christ was and the goals He had?*



## Preparing to Serve God

### **Samuel served the Lord from his childhood (1 Sam 2:18-21).**

- How was Samuel's childhood different from that of the rest of his peers?
- What kind of hardships do you think Samuel had to endure, being consecrated to the Lord for full-time service at such a young age?
- What qualities did Samuel have to cultivate in order to be able to serve God at such a young age and sustain it through his adulthood?

*When we talk about goals, we think of planning. But, to actually achieve our goals, we have to carry out our plans and work towards the goals. In the Bible, there are many who prepared themselves when they were young for a very noble cause -- to serve God. Let us now take a look at how these people equipped themselves for God's service.*

### **Daniel and his friends withstood foreign influences and excelled in a foreign land (Dan 1:1, 6-19).**

- When Daniel and his three friends refused the food of the king, what spiritual qualities/knowledge were demonstrated?
- Why do you think they could maintain their stance and glorify God in the midst of foreigners?

### **Timothy was trained from a young age to be a good worker of God (Acts 19:22, 20:4; 2 Tim 1:5).**

- What are some of the good works of Timothy?
- Timothy's faith was established at a young age. How can a youth equip himself to be a good worker of God, like Timothy did?



1. What was the Lord Jesus' goal in life, according to Luke 4:18?
2. What was the goal in life set for Samuel even before he was born?
3. What are some of the important qualities a good worker of God must possess? How can one be trained for these qualities? (Refer to examples from the lives of the Lord Jesus, Samuel, Daniel & Timothy.)

What are your goals in life? What are your goals like? Do you have goals for yourself and for those whom you love? Do you include God in your goals? When Paul, the apostle, met the Lord Jesus for the first time, he asked, "What do you want me to do?" (Acts 9:6). In your goals and plans, do you ever ask this question? Here are two real-life testimonies of church members who have resolved to live their lives for God's use.

## Questions:

- 1) From these two testimonies, what were the important steps involved in the plans the believers had for God?
- 2) No one can be the solitary hero in any work for God. The support of brothers and sisters is really important in our plans for God. Describe the roles of the brethren in the plans of these believers.
- 3) What were the sacrifices the believers made in their plans for God? What do you think were the difficulties they had to overcome?

### Testimony 1

During one NYTS, one brother was fasting and praying to God about his future. He was about to graduate from college in a year, and had many questions on his mind. Will he even get a job? What positions should he apply for? Which city should he move to? Will he do well in his career? For many days during the NYTS, even though he fasted and prayed very hard, he didn't feel that God was really with him, until one afternoon when he felt God finally talk to him in his prayer.

In that prayer, this brother suddenly felt like God's voice was directed at him (though he didn't physically hear anything). In this prayer, he felt so strong that God was posing a question to him, "What about ME?" He then realized that his prayers had all been about HIMSELF and what he wanted to do in his life on earth. He had not thought about what he wanted to do for God or what God wanted him to do.

That prayer was a great awakening for that brother. He started to know what he ought to do. After talking with pastors and fellow brothers and sisters, he found answers to all his questions and had a part for God in all his plans. Now, he's got a good job in a city away from home and he's actively helping out with the church there, for the members there really needed more help in building up the church.

### Testimony 2

Some twenty, thirty years ago, the True Jesus Church was not established in as many continents as it is today. There were two teenage brothers in Taiwan who made an agreement between themselves that when they got older, they would go together to Europe, where the church had not been established, and bring the gospel there. They began on their ambition for God by putting it in their prayers. They also worked really hard on learning the languages spoken in Europe. After college, they applied to graduate schools there. They were accepted and they studied very hard in graduate school. After that, they got jobs there and settled down in their newfound homes. Together with some other members who went to Europe to study or to work, they met together for services and preached to whomever they met. Thank God, the churches in Europe have been established and more members have been added over the years.

# Setting Goals

## Life Application

*Have you ever thought about your goals?  
Have you ever taken the time to  
actually write the goals you long to reach,  
and then evaluate them?  
If not, here is a pattern you can follow.*

**Step 1** Begin by writing one spiritual goal you would like to accomplish this month. Write it down. You might write, "My goal is to learn more about the Bible," or "My goal is to have a better prayer life."

**Step 2** Second, you need to be able to measure it in some tangible way. You will need to rewrite your goal if it is not measurable. For example, a better prayer life could be measured by getting up 10 minutes earlier each day and praying or praying for all family members each night before going to sleep. These are clear goals because they can be easily measured. You can tell when you've reached your goal. Remember to write your goals in terms of specific actions.

**Step 3** Now, go ahead and write several spiritual goals for the future--for this year and next year, or for the next 2-3 years.

**Step 4** Fourth, evaluate your goals. Because these are spiritual goals, ask yourself the following questions for each goal.



*You can add other questions you might think are helpful in determining whether a goal is spiritually valuable.*

**Step 5** Now, prepare to share your goals with your class. Tell them about the process you went through to get your goal written and evaluated. You may want to share with the class during the next month how you're meeting your spiritual goals.

- \*If I accomplish this goal, will Jesus Christ be glorified?*
- \*Does this goal help me and/or others become more like Jesus Christ?*
- \*Is my goal a specific action I can see or measure?*
- \*Will I know when I have accomplished my goal?*
- \*Is it possible to reach my goal?*
- \*Does meeting this goal require the work of the Holy Spirit?*

## Discussion...

### 1. "Do not be conformed to this world"

- What does it mean to you when Paul says we should not conform to this world?

- What are some of the things of the world today that are contrary to God's teachings?

- Do you see any of the people around you practicing those deeds that are not in accordance with God's teachings?

- Read John 15:19. The Lord Jesus says that if we distinguish ourselves from the rest of the world, we are likely to be hated by the world. What kinds of pressure do you feel from your peers with regard to your not conforming to their behavior? How do you keep yourself from not conforming to those practices despite peer pressure?

### 2. "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind"

- Read Titus 3:5. The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit can renew us. Does that mean that anyone and everyone who has the Holy Spirit will automatically not conform to the world? Is there anything more that we have to do after we have received the Holy Spirit?

- Read Galatians 5:16-18. What does this part of the Bible teach us about how to be led and renewed by the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to "walk in the Spirit"?

- Give some examples of how we can be "transformed" to God's will.

### 3. "Prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"

- Can you think of Bible verses that directly refer to the will of God? With the help of a concordance, look up all the verses that mention "the will of God." Summarize your findings and share them with the class.

- Other than those verses you have found, what else do you know about the will of God?

- What are some of the things you can do that will conform to the good, acceptable and perfect will of God?

In Matthew 5:14, the Lord Jesus says that we are "the light of the world." In this world of spiritual darkness, we have to shine forth the light of God. To do that, we must not partake of what the unbelievers do. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" (2 Cor 6:14). Since days of old, believers of God have shown themselves to be different from the people of their time. Today, we shall take a look at some of these examples.

**For each of the Bible sections below, list the activities of the people who did not acknowledge God. Then, as a study in contrast, list what the people of God did.**

**< A. Genesis 6:1-11 >**

What the people of the time were doing:

What Noah did:

**< B. Genesis 18:20, 19:4--7 >**

What the people of the time were doing:

What Lot did:

**< C. Genesis 39:6-12 >**

What the wife of Potiphar was doing:

What Joseph did:

**< D. Daniel 1:3-10 >**

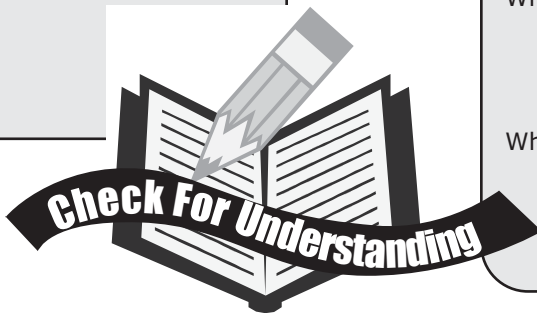
What the other youths in the court were doing:

What Daniel did:

**< E. Daniel 3:1-6, 16-18 >**

What the others in the country were doing:

What Shadrach, Meshach & Abed-Nego did:



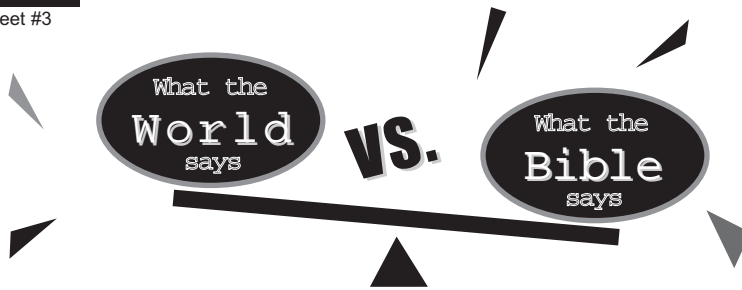
1) What does it mean to be "transformed by the renewing of the mind"?

2) Summarize some of the sinful deeds of the people who did not know God.

3) Summarize the contrast in behavior shown by the people who knew God.

# Godly Values and Worldly Values

## Bible Study



Although the scriptures were physically penned more than 2000 years ago, they are still relevant to our lives today. This is because "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16). Let us take a look at some real-life situations that youths in our church have encountered. Then, making use of the Bible verses given, and also adding more biblical references of your own, give these youths advice as to what they ought to do. The names of the youths have been changed and their stories slightly modified.

Alice had always been in a private school. But after her parents moved to the city, she was enrolled in a public high school. In the city, the student population is more diverse, and she made friends who were from different backgrounds. One day, she got a shock when the group of buddies that she hung out with offered her a chance to try something really fun. They suggested that she try out some of the drugs that they had been enjoying. Alice knew that her friends smoked cigarettes, but never thought they were actually into something more! She knew instinctively that she should never join them. But, they were her closest friends in the school and being new, she sort of needed their companionship. If she did not join them, they may not want to hang out with her in the future.

### Your advice to ALICE:

**Biblical References:** 1 Cor 6:19, 20; 2 Tim 2:22; 1 Cor 6:12, 10:23



### Your advice to SAMMY:

**Biblical References:** Jas 1:15; 2 Tim 2:22; Eccl 12:14; Eph 5:15, 16

Like any other teenager, Sammy spent quite a great deal of his time after school chatting on-line with friends. He found this to be a good way to keep in touch with people, especially friends in church whom he did not get to see every day. He also made some new friends through the various chat-rooms on the Internet. One day, one of his on-line friends suggested to him that he might want to check out some "sizzling" websites: pornographic sites. This friend told him that there was nothing wrong to simply view some images and not actually do anything. Just checking them out once or twice was no big deal. Besides, no one would ever know.

Diane has heard much about loving our brothers and sisters in Christ. She never seriously thought about it until the RE teacher initiated a "buddy system", and she was paired as a buddy to someone she felt was not at all her type. She never really talked to that sister in church. The way she dressed, and even the way she talked simply was not her cup of tea. She could not imagine how she could become prayer-buddies with someone whom she did not like. At school she could choose whom she wanted to hang out with. No one could force anyone to be someone's friend. But, she couldn't possibly say no to her RE teacher. She started feeling resentment growing inside of her, both towards the RE teacher and towards her assigned buddy.

### Your advice to DIANE:

**Biblical References:** Gal 6:2; Jn 13:34, 35; Gal 5:22, 23



### Your advice to DAVID:

**Biblical References:** Ex 20:12; Eph 6:1-3

David has had a lot of problems with his parents since he started high school. His parents seemed to want to meddle too much in his affairs. That was okay when he was younger. But, he was already in high school and he considered himself a grown-up. He didn't like it when his mother wanted to make sure he ate properly and not whatever he liked. He no longer liked to go to the mall with his parents. He even felt that their "Chinglish" was an embarrassment to him. His friends at school told him to simply bear with them for a bit more. Once he went on to college, he could plan on moving out on his own and be free from his parents forever.



In this competitive world, it is important to be strong in order to survive. So often, the values that we absorb from the world are brought into the church and into our lives. We become no different than people of the world. We no longer can shine as light in this dark world because we have become acculturated with the rest of the world, with the people who do not know God. It is important that we realize our special status as God's people and have the wisdom to tell the difference between what the world esteems and what God favors. Here is a verse that highlights the difference between what strength means to the world and what it means from a Christian perspective.



*A strong man/woman works out every day to keep his/her body in shape,  
But a man/woman of strength kneels in prayer to keep his/her soul in shape.*

*A strong man/woman isn't afraid of anything,  
But a man/woman of strength shows courage in the midst of his/her fear.*

*A strong man/woman won't let anyone get the best of him/her,  
But a man/woman of strength gives the best of himself/herself to everyone.*

*A strong man/woman makes mistakes and avoids the same in the future,  
But a man/woman of strength realizes life's mistakes can also be God's blessings and capitalizes on them.*

*A strong man/woman walks sure-footedly,  
But a man/woman of strength knows God will catch him/her when he/she falls.*

*A strong man/woman wears the look of confidence on his/her face,  
But a man/woman of strength wears grace.*

*A strong man/woman has faith that he/she is strong enough for the journey,  
But a man/woman of strength has faith that it is in the journey that he/she will become strong.*

Now, write at least one paragraph that illustrates the contrast between what the world says and what the Bible teaches, as is shown in the verses above. You may want to think about what the world around you thinks is "strength." Contrast that with what you know from the Bible to be strength. As best as possible, give a Bible verse to support what you write.

For example, you can write something like this: "A strong man sees power in getting people to obey him, but a man of strength sees power in being gentle and getting along with others." For, the Lord Jesus Himself says, "I am gentle and lowly of heart" (Mt 11:29). Then, share it with the rest of your class.





Imagine you have a younger brother and both of you are in your late 30's. Both of you are well established and making reasonable salaries. You have a nice car, a good size house, a great job and you also maintain a good savings plan that enables you to give tithe to the church. One day, your younger brother suddenly comes and tells you that he is going through bankruptcy and he demands that you give him a large sum of money in order to pay off some of his debts. What would you do for the sake of your relationship with your younger brother?

## WARM UP



## CHOICES

*Choosing between possessions and people (or between riches and relationships) is a hard decision to make. But many of us have to face this kind of choice in life. We can choose to love our possessions or to love people. How do we make this decision? Does God care about how we value relationships and the way we value our possessions?*

### Let's take a look at Genesis 13:8-13.

*Abram was a very wise man when it came to putting people before possessions. When did Abram allow Lot to take whatever he wanted?*

*What do you think this did for their relationship?*

### Let's read Genesis 14:1-15:1.

*After Abram and Lot parted, Lot went on to enjoy a good life in the best of the land. However, later on in his life, several kings surrounding Sodom rose up and looted the city, taking Lot and his family with them. After Lot was captured, what did Abram do?*

*What reward did the king of Sodom offer Abram for his deed?*

*Why did Abram turn it down?*

*What did this do for his relationship with the king of Sodom?*

*What did Abram give to the priest Melchizedek?*

*What did this do for his relationship with God?*

# Priorities, Possessions and Time Management

*Does your list of priorities follow God's plan for your life?*

*The Bible makes it very clear where God should be on our list—the top! When it comes to investing our time and money, our list should be God, family, school or work, then recreation. There are a few standards that God wants us to focus on when it comes to money and possessions. Read the following verses and discuss why they are important values and standards for us to go by.*

## Concerning Contentment

We should be very thankful for the things we have. "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you'" (Heb 13:5). Read 1 Timothy 6:6-8. "Godliness with contentment is great gain for we brought nothing into this world and....."

## The Importance of Working Hard

A lot of people don't like to work and want everything. Their philosophy is, "Why worry about tomorrow, go for the now!" Therefore, a lot of people go around buying all kinds of stuff on credit. But remember, as God's people, He wants us to save for the things we need. "He who works his land will have abundant food, but he who chases fantasies lacks judgment" (Proverbs 12:11).

## Managing Money

We should be using our money wisely and with an ear to God's heart. "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased" (Hebrews 13:16).

## Planning Ahead

God wants us to be planners. What you do today is your foundation for tomorrow. "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed" (Proverbs 16:3).

## Priorities



1. Why did Abram let Lot choose whatever land he wanted first? What does this tell us about Abram's priorities and also his faith in God?
2. How did Abram make sure he did not "owe" the king of Sodom anything? Why did he want to do that?
3. What does Hebrews 13:5 tell us about the right attitudes we should have towards riches?
4. What advice does Hebrews 13:16 have for us with regard to our relationships with the people around us?

Tolstoy once told a story of an outlandish real estate sale. Some Russian tradesmen made an offer to sell all the land a person could walk around on in one day—for one thousand rubles. The person had to be back by sunset, however, or lose his money. A peasant heard of the offer and sold everything he had to take advantage of it. He gave his one thousand rubles to the men and set off. He walked for a while and saw all the beautiful hills that he wanted for his own. After walking past those, he saw even more land that he wanted. He quickened his pace to include that property. Dusk was approaching, and he had to make his way back—but there was just a little more he wished to have. He began to race back to meet the deadline of darkness, encircling as much property as humanly possible. He ran as hard as he could to the starting point. He made it on time, but collapsed dead upon the mark. Now all the land that he needed was a six-foot hole in which to be buried.

## Questions:

1. What would you do if given a similar opportunity?
2. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-8. According to this verse, what is the key to contentment?
3. What is your own definition of godliness?
4. Since God will provide for our needs, both physical and emotional, how should we value our priorities?
5. Why is it that our attitude toward our possessions has a big effect on our relationships, especially our relationship with God?
6. Each one of us will die one day. What will be your possession if God tells you that tomorrow is your last day?

**idol** gave us our resources for several reasons. Surprisingly, one of those reasons is the pleasure they bring. But once you desire the pleasure of the gifts more than the giver, your desires become idolatry. What does God say about that? Let's read James 4:4-5. This verse tells us that God will not tolerate second place.

The ultimate reason people accumulate wealth is to increase their sense of security. God, the creator and provider of all wealth, knows that only a relationship with Him will provide the true security that people seek. Just like what we studied earlier, Abram's choices were grounded in his confidence that trusting God was the most profitable choice he could make, even when the benefit wasn't immediate.

## Spirit of Giving

*As children of God, we are to be the light of the world. This refers not only to our good behavior, but also entails a generous spirit of sharing what God has blessed us with. Those who are willing to offer and share are always found pleasing in the eyes of God.*

*Let's study a few examples from the Bible, some of whom refused to share while others were generous and were praised.*



### Mark 10:17-30

*The rich young man who couldn't give up his wealth*

1. What was the Lord Jesus' reply to the young man regarding the method to attaining eternal life?

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2. Do you think the Lord really meant that we have to be poor and penniless to become His disciples? If not, what do you think the Lord Jesus was saying to the rich young man?

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3. What does "treasure in heaven" mean to you?

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### Luke 16:19-25

*The rich man and Lazarus*

1. Is it a sin to be rich? If not, what was wrong with the way the rich man led his life?

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2. Who are the "Lazaruses" today that we can show our generosity to? (Read also Mt 10:40-42 & 25:3-45)

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*Giving  
tithes*

- 1) **First biblical recording of tithing**

- Genesis 14:17-20
- Ref. Hebrews 7:1-4

- 2) **Purpose of tithes during the times of the priests**

- Joshua 14:3-4
- Numbers 18:21-24
- Leviticus 27:30

- 3) **The importance of offering tithe in the eyes of God**

- Malachi 3:8,9
- Malachi 3:10

- 4) **In the New Testament, tithing was continued as well (e.g. Luke 11:42).**

### Matthew 26: 1-13

*The woman who offered the alabaster flask of ointment*

1. How much do you think the flask of oil would cost, in modern terms?

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2. What did the people present say about her offering?

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3. What do you say about her offering?

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4. What did Jesus Christ say about her offering?

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- 1) PROV 6:6 - 8: "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise . . . she provides her supplies in the summer and gathers her food in the harvest."
- 2) PROV 6:10, 11: "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep --- so shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, and your need like an armed man."
- 3) PROV 26:15: "The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth."
- 4) PROV 31:15: "She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants."
- 5) PROV 31:16: "She considers a field and buys it, from her profits she plants a vineyard."
- 6) ECCL 4:6: "Better is a handful with quietness, than both hands full together with toil and grasping for the wind."
- 7) ECCL 10:18: "Because of laziness the building decays, and through the idleness of hands the house leaks."

## Wealth \_\_\_\_\_

Learning to save and manage money wisely

*When we talk about wealth, we do not necessarily mean millions of dollars. Wealth is what we have, financially speaking. Read the pieces of biblical advice to the left. Then, in your own words, write down three important pointers you would give to yourself or your peers in church regarding good wealth management.*

1

2

3

1. What does tithe mean?

2. Why did God expect tithes from the people of Israel?

3. How can we tell that God views tithing as something very important?

4. What did Jesus Christ ask the rich young man to do to obtain eternal life?

5. What was wrong with the life-style of the rich man in the parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus"?

check For Understanding

# What Does YOUR Financial Plan Look Like?

## Part 1

Today, when you turn the pages of newspapers and many magazines, you see advertisements by investment companies telling readers about financial plans. Let's read a story of how a successful businessman came up with a good financial plan for a poor fisherman he met on vacation.

An American businessman was at the pier of a small South American coastal village when a small boat with just one fisherman docked. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. The American complimented the fisherman on the quantity of his fish and asked how long it took to catch them. The fisherman replied, "Only a little while."

The American then asked why he did not stay out longer and catch more fish. The fisherman said that he had enough to support his family's immediate needs. The American then asked, "So, what do you do with the rest of your time?"

The fisherman replied, "I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, take a siesta with my wife and stroll into the village each evening where I sip wine and play the guitar with my amigos. I have a full and busy life."

Then the American said, "I am a Harvard MBA. I can help you. You should spend more time fishing and with the proceeds, buy a bigger boat. With the proceeds from the bigger boat, you could buy more boats, and eventually, you would have a fleet of fishing boats. Instead of selling your catch to a middleman, you would sell directly to the processor, eventually opening your own cannery. You would control the product, processing and distribution . . . you would have to leave this small fishing village, move to LA and eventually NYC where you would run your expanding enterprise. You would then sell your company stock to the public where shares are traded at the New York Stock Exchange. Then you would make millions and millions of dollars."

"How long would all this take, senor?" the fisherman stopped the American.

"Some 20 or more years," the American replied thoughtfully.

"Millions, hmm, then what, senor?" so asked the fisherman.

"Then, you would retire, move to a small coastal village where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your children, take a siesta with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings where you would sip wine and play the guitar with your amigos."

## Part 2

Having read about one possible "financial plan" as offered by the American businessman in the story, try writing your own financial plan. Perhaps many of you, being students, do not have so-called financial plans yet. But, in this exercise, let us plan ahead a little and imagine what we want our lives to look like in 20 years' time. Draft out a financial plan for your own use between now and then. After that, share with your class what your plan looks like. Here are a few guiding questions that you may want to consider:

- ▶ Who are the people included in your plan – just your self, or others, like your family members, God & church?
- ▶ What types of activities will help you achieve your goals/plan?
- ▶ Are the activities you plan to be involved in to achieve your goals acceptable in the sight of God?
- ▶ What are the sacrifices you have to make to achieve those goals? Are those sacrifices worthwhile?
- ▶ What do you think God would say about this plan of yours now, and on the Day of Judgment?

## Financial Plan

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What does this story tell you?
2. Who do you think is the wiser of the two? Why?





## “IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE” (ACTS 20:35)

Do you know who said these words? It was the Lord Jesus Himself. These words are hard to believe or accept if one is very poor. Nevertheless there are many good testimonies of people who gave even though they had limited possessions. Let's first read a biblical example in Mark 12:41-44.

- How much did the woman give as an offering?
- Why did the Lord Jesus praise her act of offering?
- What do you think is more important, the amount offered or the attitude in offering? Can we have one and not the other? Why?

Next, we shall read of two modern day cases of people who offered when they themselves were facing financial difficulties.

### Story A

Hudson Taylor was a very famous missionary who pioneered the missionary work in China, before the gospel was ever really preached in China. One day, he was called to a home to pray for a sick woman. He was called because, unlike other religious leaders of the day, he did not charge the family for his visit.

The woman was from a very poor family. When Taylor saw her poverty, he clutched the only coin in his pocket. It was all the money he had then. He wished he had two, so he could give one to her. After all, he could not give her his only coin! What would he do to survive? He had only two meals left at home for himself.

He knelt down to pray for the woman but found that he could not pray. He felt his conscience telling him that he should give up his coin. But, how could he walk away with nothing to live on? With that thought, he tried to pray but failed again. Finally, he gave her the coin. After that, he felt great freedom.

Hudson Taylor's experience provides one example of what it means to reach out to the poor and needy – this is something God asks of us, even when we are poor and needy ourselves.



### Story B

One church sister contracted an infection and had to undergo a minor surgery. She thought she could try to hold it off for as long as she could, because she did not have insurance that would cover her medical expenses and she could not afford to pay the medical bills quoted to her by the hospital. Being in great pain, she knew she had to try to do something about it. A concerned friend recommended her to a hospital where medical students and residents gave free medical treatment as part of their training. That hospital, however, accepted only a limited number of walk-in patients on certain days of the week. She was told that the line for this free-treatment program began each day at 6 a.m.

Without any delay, she took the subway to the hospital the next morning. It was a cold morning in the early part of spring, where winds still chilled one right down to the bones and the slush on the roads had not quite melted yet. Upon reaching the hospital, the door to that clinic was not even open yet. She saw that there were already quite a number of people standing in line. She joined in the line, praying that God would let her be one of those accepted for free treatment.

After two hours of waiting, her number was called. She went up to the reception counter with great anticipation and thanksgiving. Then the bad news: the receptionist told her that due to a decreased number of doctors that day, she and those who came after her had to go home and try again another day. She felt completely crushed. She felt tears flowing out of her eyes uncontrollably. Why did God allow that to happen? Why did she have to suffer like this? Thoughts of her pitiful plight and doubts about God's love filled her whole head as she walked to the train station in tears. She prayed to God that she would not become bitter towards Him, for that was how she was feeling then.

Upon getting off the train, as she was walking through a passageway to get to another connecting train, she heard a thin voice singing. She saw that it was a blind, fragile-looking street performer who was playing on an electronic keyboard and singing with as much energy as he could. Her heart melted. She thought of how much more blessed she was, for she had an easier job of sustaining her livelihood than this old, feeble man. Who knows, maybe he had family members to feed, or even a sick mother to take care of, or maybe even medical conditions or bills to deal with. Immediately, she emptied all the coins in her wallet that she had, and put them into the dirty cardboard money box in front of the old man.

At that moment, the sister's physical pain did not leave her. But, in her heart, she realized that life is beautiful after all, for there is love. She thanked God that she did not become bitter. She thanked God that she still had a little bit of compassion in her to think about someone else, and not be consumed by herself. With that thought, somehow, her physical pain seemed more bearable.



## Questions:

1. Have you ever been as poor as Hudson was at that time, left with only two meals at home and a coin? Have you ever been so poor that medical treatment was beyond you?
2. Most of the people living in the USA today are not so poor that they are left with only enough for two meals. But, it is not hard to imagine what it is like to be that poor. Put yourself in the shoes of Hudson and that sister. What would your feelings be like?
3. Neither Hudson nor the sister's financial problem was solved when they helped someone out. Nevertheless, each of them received some kind of reward. What reward was that?
4. Do you meet people who are poor and in need of your help? Who are they? What do you think you can do to help them?
5. What is one lesson about the spirit of giving that you have gained from either or both of these stories?

# Loneliness and Depression

## Bible Study

### Warm Up

Do you know that in the USA, depression is the sickness for which most patients seeking mental health treatment are being diagnosed with? This problem has almost become a social problem. Each year, millions of dollars are being channeled into the treatment and research in this area. Why do you think depression is getting more and more prevalent today?

Many characters in the Bible went through periods of loneliness. Yet, they never bowed down to loneliness. Instead, they drew closer to God because they were lonely, and by relying on God, they went on to accomplish great works for God. We will look at a few of these characters today, and study their relationships with God. Read the Bible references indicated below and answer the questions which follow.

.....**LONELY BUT NOT ALONE**

### (A) Jacob

Read Gen 27:41-45, 28:10-22.

- 1) What do you think went through the mind of Jacob as he fled his own home in haste?
- 2) What were the possible dangers that Jacob faced as night fell and he was out in the wilderness all by himself (28:11)?

### (B) Moses

Read Ex 2:15-22, 33:18-23; Num 12:3; Deut 34.

- 1) Why did Moses have to flee to the wilderness of Midian?
- 2) Was there a difference in the personality of Moses before and after he spent the forty years in Midian as a shepherd?
- 3) Discuss what you know about the life of a shepherd. Moses was an aggressive man who killed a man. After the forty years in the wilderness, he became a very meek person. How much do you think being a shepherd contributed to the change in Moses? Why?
- 4) Many times, Moses was lonely. But it was also during those times that he got close to God. What do you think would be the modern day equivalent of Moses' experiences in Exodus 33 and Deuteronomy 34?

### (C) Joseph

Read Gen 37:2, 41:46.

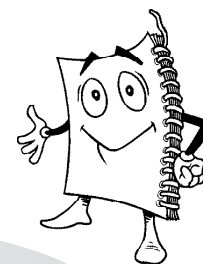
- 1) Joseph was about seventeen years old when he was sold as a slave to Egypt. He was thirty years old when he became the premier in the land of Egypt. Recount what happened in his life in those thirteen years.
- 2) In those thirteen years as a slave and prisoner, what questions do you think Joseph had in his mind? How would you characterize his feelings all those years?
- 3) Read Acts 7:9 & Genesis 39:1. Do you think that having God with us necessarily means that we are successful by worldly standards? Explain your reasons.

### (D) Lord Jesus

- 1) Read Matthew 8:20 and Luke 9:58. What comes to your mind when you read the verse where the Lord Jesus says He has nowhere to lay His head? What does it mean to not have a place to lay one's head? Why did Jesus Christ not have a place to lay?
- 2) Read Matthew 13:53 – 58. Have you ever been left out by friends? Maybe they were hanging out and didn't include you? Even when you have a lot of people around you, do you feel very excluded or alone? Do you think Jesus Christ felt the same way when people from His own hometown rejected Him?
- 3) How did the Lord Jesus handle the problem of loneliness? (Cite examples from the gospel books.)
- 4) Read Matthew 26:36 – 43. Why was it so crucial for the disciples to pray with the Lord Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane? What do you think were the feelings of the Lord Jesus when He came back twice and found the disciples sleeping?
- 5) Do you think the Lord Jesus was overcome by loneliness? Explain your answer.

### Unity is Strength

**"A man who has friends must himself be friendly." (Prov 18:24)**



#### Esther

-- Alone in the palace, united with the other Jews (Esther 3: 8 - 4:16)

1. What was the crisis facing the Jews at the time when Esther was queen?
2. Why was Esther not able to save her own people even though she was the queen?
3. What did she ask Mordecai and all the other Jews to do?
4. Are there similar situations in our lives today that resemble the situation of Esther?

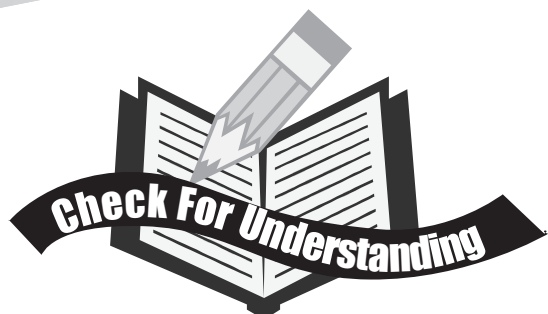
#### Daniel & his three friends - Holding on to their faith in a foreign land (Daniel 1 & 3)

1. In Daniel 1, what was the dilemma that Daniel and his three friends faced when they were selected to be among the special group of youths to serve in the king's palace?
2. In Chapter 3, what was the tough choice that befell the three youths?
3. Do you think it would have been easier for one person to succumb to the king's command if Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego) had not had each other's company?

#### The Apostles --

Always working together (Acts 3:1-8, 12, 13:1-2)

1. In the examples you read above, which apostles were paired together in their ministry?
2. Read Mark 6:7. Why do you think workers should work in pairs (or in groups)?
  - a) What are the disadvantages of working alone?
  - b) What are the advantages of working with someone else?



1. How did God show Jacob that he was not alone when he was fleeing from his brother?

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2. What were some of the benefits Moses reaped by being alone?

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3. What difficulties did Daniel and his three friends overcome by standing united as exiles in the foreign land of Babylon?

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4. Give two examples of the apostles who paired up and worked together.

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It is often said that the best cure for any problem is to understand the cause of the phenomenon and thereby prevent it. Loneliness, to varying degrees, is something young adults like you have to deal with at times. Let's now look at some possible causes of loneliness and as a class, suggest ways to help someone who may be in that predicament. The first one has been done for you as an illustration.

CAUSES OF LONELINESS	RESULT	ADVICE/SUGGESTIONS TO OVERCOME LONELINESS
<b>1.</b> <i>Not joining the worldly activities of friends at school</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being "left out" of the cliques formed among classmates</li> <li>- Not having close friends at school to hang out with</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drawing close to friends in church, involving yourself with the activities of church friends and activities organized by the church</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>
<b>2.</b> <i>Not having enough attention and care from parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Often feeling bored, being alone at home</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>
<b>3.</b> <i>A lot of our peers already have close boyfriends or girlfriends</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feeling as if you are falling behind and wishing to have the experience of intimacy with someone special too</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>
<b>4.</b> <i>What other causes of loneliness can you think of?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> <li>- _____</li> </ul>

# Loneliness and Depression

## Life Application

**L**ife is full of times when we feel lonely. Even when we have people around us, we sometimes feel very lonely too. It is as if there's a gap in our souls. That is why we need to draw closer to God in times of loneliness. We should always believe that God is with us. The following is a poem that may be familiar to some of us. Read the poem and then discuss the questions that follow with the rest of the class.

## "Footprints in the Sand"



### Questions for discussion:

- 1) Are what times in your life do you really feel that God is walking with you side by side?
- 2) Have there been times in your life when you felt that you were walking alone and God was not with you? In retrospect, do you still think that God was not with you at those times? Why?
- 3) What encouragement would you give to someone who feels lonely in (a) church and (b) life?

### Footprints in the Sand

*One night, a man had a dream.  
He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord.  
Across the sky flashed scenes from his life.  
For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand:  
One belonging to him and the other to the Lord.*

*When the last scene of his life flashed before him,  
He looked back at the footprints in the sand.  
He noticed that many times along the path of his life  
There were only one set of footprints.  
He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.*

*This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it:  
"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way.*

*But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life,  
There is only one set of footprints.  
I don't understand why when I needed you most  
You would leave me."*

*The Lord replied, "My son, my precious child,  
I love you and I would never leave you.  
During your times of trial and suffering,  
When you see only one set of footprints,  
It was then that I carried you."*

*(Attributed to Mary Stevenson)*

Do you ever have difficulty getting along with people?

If so,

you are not alone. Someone commented, "It's easy to love humanity; it's people I can't stand." Sometimes, getting along with people can be a pain. Getting along with others often pushes us to the limits of our endurance. But you are not alone. People in the Bible who walked with God had their own struggles with certain individuals too. Today, we will talk about Moses, who was drafted by God to lead a nation. The nation of Israel repeatedly rebelled against God and against Moses. How did Moses handle these people?

In groups of three, read the following assigned Scriptures. Then work together to file a report for our church magazine "Manna" summarizing what happened. Use your imagination to fill in some of the gaps as you write the stories. Detail the feelings and frustrations of the people as they reacted against Moses. Share your finished reports with the class.

### Assigned Scriptures:

1. **Exodus 14:11-12**

The Israelites should have been rejoicing now that God had handpicked Moses to lead them into the land flowing with milk and honey. Instead, they groused and complained.

2. **Exodus 15:24**

The Israelites attacked Moses for not having any water. Once again, they lost their focus on God and grumbled against His provision.

3. **Exodus 16:3**

The Israelites complained that they didn't have any food. It is amazing that they were not rejoicing over their freedom in the new land but rather thinking about the old days in Egypt. If God had provided water earlier on, God could also provide food.

4. **Exodus 17:2-3**

The Israelites grumbled and complained to Moses when they faced a shortage of water. They really should have remembered how God had miraculously provided for their needs in recent situations. This time, Moses was really about to lose his patience.

5. **Exodus 20, 32**

God appeared to the nation, spoke to them in a voice, demonstrated His greatness through thunder and lightning (20:18) and gave them the Ten Commandments. In Chapter 32, the people of Israel turned their backs on God and chose to worship a golden calf.

6. **Numbers 11:4-6**

Here the Israelites again groused about their food. Moses really lost his patience and he asked God why he was stuck with these unthankful people.

7. **Numbers 12:1-2, 9-10**

Moses' sister Miriam decided to include her brother Aaron, the high priest, to help her overthrow Moses. God was very angry and Miriam became leprous.

8. **Numbers 13-14**

The Israelites didn't want to enter the land after Moses sent 12 spies to survey the land for 40 days. So God granted their wish. For 40 years, one day for each day the spies were in the land, the entire nation wandered aimlessly in the desert. Eventually, the older generation died and the next generation enjoyed the promised land. Remember, complaining and grumbling to God is not acceptable.

9. **Numbers 16:3**

Korah led a revolt. He and his entire company were destroyed.

10. **Number 20:3-5**

Moses had lost all patience. He blatantly disobeyed God, and took credit for a miracle that had just been performed. As a result, Moses was told he could not enter the land.



### Reacting to Confrontational Situations

#### Example 1 Gideon spoke respectfully to the Ephraimites

Now the men of Ephraim said to him, "Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?" And they reprimanded him sharply. So he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? God has delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And what was I able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger toward him subsided. (Judges 8:1-3)



1. When the Israelites complained about not having water to drink in Exodus 15 & Exodus 17 respectively, what happened?
2. How did Miriam revolt against Moses and why? What was the outcome?
3. What did Korah and his family do against Moses, and what happened to them in the end?
4. How did Gideon and Jephthah deal with confrontation from the Ephraimites? What lessons can we learn from the different ways they handled the situations and the outcomes that ensued?

Being able to react calmly and tactfully in a situation of conflict is very important. Let's take a look at two contrasting biblical examples to see how a difference in the way we respond in a conflict can lead to changed outcomes.

#### Example 2 Jephthah intensified the conflict with harsh words

Then the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the people of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!" And Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were in a great struggle with the people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. So when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the LORD delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?" Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites and among the Manassites." The Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites arrived. And when any Ephraimite who escaped said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No," then they would say to him, "Then say, 'Shibboleth!'" And he would say, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right. Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand Ephraimites. (Judges 12:1-6)

### Questions:

1. Who do you think is the wiser of the two judges -Gideon or Jephthah? Why?
2. Why did the words of Gideon please the Ephraimites?
3. Why did the words of Jephthah anger the Ephraimites?
4. What are the lessons to learn from these two contrasting examples?



# Interpersonal Conflicts

## Life Application

### Case Studies

— Read the following scenarios. Then answer the listed questions. —

My best friend thinks I've been spreading rumors about her and her family. I never did that, but she won't let me explain. Every time I call her, she hangs up the phone on me. I sent her an email, but she didn't even reply. What can I do? At school, she just ignores me.

1

My parents just don't seem to understand. Every time I come home after being with my friends, they would ask me a bunch of questions. They question me about this friend and question me about that friend. I've never had a friend they liked. Why don't they get off my case? The other day I came home way past the curfew. I was having fun at a party and did something stupid. Then, my parents yelled at me. They just don't understand me. Worse than that, they will never trust me again.

2

My school teacher thinks that I stole some money out of the fund raising box. Someone, I'm not sure who, told my teacher that I was acting kind of funny, and that I was hanging around that fund raising box the other day. But I had nothing to do with it. I didn't even know where they kept the money. Now, my teacher watches every move I make. In fact, I've caught other school friends watching me too. I can't stand it anymore.

3

### Discussion

*Interpersonal conflicts are really tough to deal with. When a relationship breaks down because we are misunderstood or misjudged, it really hurts.*

1. What would you say to someone who came to you with these problems?
2. What attitudes do we need to bring healing to these kinds of divisions between people?
3. Describe a situation where you patched up a severed relationship.
4. What could you do as a third party to help in any of these three situations?
5. How would you ask God to help you if you were having these problems?
6. How would you think God wants us to bring healing to broken relationships or help friends patch up theirs?

## Conflict & Peace

The Bible is the best guide to good relationships with anyone. It's much better than any self-help guide available in bookstores. If only we were more diligent in discovering the many tips on communication that are found in the Bible! Below are some Bible verses that teach

us about communication. For each of these verses, describe a situation that you have experienced or witnessed where the biblical advice was shown to be at work, or could have helped avert conflicts. These four questions may help you when you analyze the situations:

- ▶ What was the situation?
- ▶ What did the parties involved do or say?
- ▶ What were the consequences?
- ▶ What did you learn from that incident?

- 1) *Think before we speak, for many a time, hasty words cause a breakdown in communication and generate defensive attitudes -- "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19) & "Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him." (Proverbs 29:20)*
- 2) *Allow the other party to finish or explain his/her side of the story. Conflicts often occur because one party simply misunderstands the actions or words of the other party, and the misunderstanding is not clarified -- "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him." (Proverbs 18:13)*
- 3) *When facing a conflict, be careful not to say anything nasty that will cause us to regret our words later. As Christians, let our words always be gracious -- "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." (Eph 4:29)*
- 4) *When caught in an argument, it is good to always stop ourselves right away and calm down before trying to resolve the conflict. It may help to wait even another day -- "It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel." (Proverbs 20:3)*
- 5) *It is important to always try to be calm and controlled, even if it means having to walk away from a situation and taking a long walk -- "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules the spirit than he who takes a city." (Proverbs 16:32)*

# Forgive and Forget

## Bible Study

*In the Bible, we see some wonderful stories of forgiveness and love. Are there any examples that come to your mind right away?*

*Today, we will look at some of these stories of forgiveness. Read the Bible passages cited here and then answer the questions that follow.*

### **A) Isaac gave in to his neighbors**

*(Read Genesis 26: 2-6, 15-33)*

1. What did Isaac's neighbors do to his property? Why was what they did terrible and serious?
2. Who were these neighbors?
3. How many times did such similar incidents occur?
4. Why do you think Isaac was able to forgive them? How does readiness to forgive someone relate to one's level of faith in God?

### **B) Joseph forgave his brothers**

*(Read Genesis 37:23-28, 47:1-6, 50:15-21)*

1. Genesis 37:23 - 28 records how Joseph's brothers sold him to Midianite traders who took Joseph to Egypt. That was not the real damage to Joseph. From age 17 to 30, he was a slave and prisoner. Put yourself in the shoes of Joseph. What were some of the hardships (physical and emotional) and missed opportunities he suffered in Egypt?
2. If you were one of Joseph's brothers who sold him to Egypt, what do you think you deserve as punishment for treating your own brother so badly?
3. What did Joseph say to his brothers in Genesis 50 that shows his deep reverence for God?

Have you ever felt hurt? Recall a few situations when you felt hurt. What happened then? Who was the person who hurt you? Did you reconcile with him/her? How did you do that?

If one has been badly hurt, it is not easy to forgive the person who caused the hurt. Nevertheless, in the Lord Jesus Christ, all wounds can heal. If we view things in the right perspective, and turn to God for comfort and love, it is possible to forgive the one who hurt us and we can also forget the injury and move on in life.

### **C) Moses prayed for his sister**

*(Read Numbers 12:1-16)*

1. What was the reason Miriam and Aaron accused Moses of wrongdoing?
2. Are they justified in their accusation? Why or why not?
3. What do you think were Moses' feelings at that time, to be openly accused by his own brother and sister?
4. What was the result of their accusing Moses?
5. What did Moses do that showed his forgiveness?

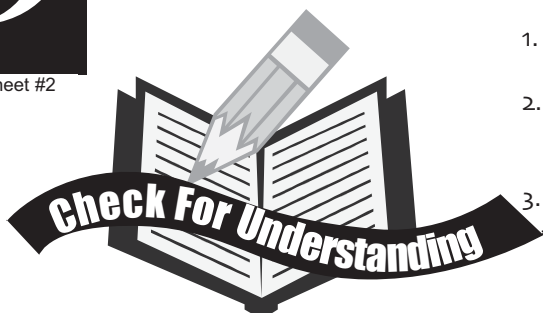
### **D) The Lord Jesus forgave those who hurt Him**

*(Read Luke 23:1-35)*

1. Why did the people want the Lord Jesus crucified?
2. Outline some of the painful inflictions the Lord Jesus had to go through.
3. When the Lord Jesus was on the cross, He uttered seven sayings. These were all very important sayings because it was extremely difficult for Him to speak while suffering on the cross. Of these seven sayings, one of them was, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Lk 23:34). Do you think you would be able to do the same and forgive someone who caused you this much pain?

# Forgive and Forget

## Life Application



1. What did Isaac's neighbors do to him? How did he react?
2. What did Joseph say and do when he met his brothers again after more than 20 years?
3. What did Moses do that proved his great magnanimity towards Miriam?

"Forgive and forget." Is it really possible to do this? We can forgive, but it is not so easy to forget.

God's word tells us, "Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Lk 6:37). The word "forgive" in Greek implies release or liberation. When we forgive and "liberate" people, we, too, will be liberated. Joseph went through great tribulations. We will use the story of Joseph to illustrate how he forgave his brothers and, in the process, liberated them and himself.

### JOSEPH SOLD

Genesis 37 describes Joseph as a good child who disliked evil. His father loved him very much and made him a robe of many colors. Instead of bringing joy, unfortunately, his father's love created disharmony among the brothers.

God sent Joseph two dreams, revealing what would happen to him in the future. This was a promise from God, showing that he would have greater achievements than his brothers. Instead of bringing him respect from his brothers, the dreams caused his brothers to hate him. These dreams were from God; they were not his own dreams. But because God allowed him to have these dreams, his brothers condemned him.

One day, his brothers went far away to shepherd the flock. Joseph was sent by his father to see how his brothers were doing. To his consternation, there he discovered his own end. When his brothers saw him approaching, they said, "Look, this dreamer is coming! ...Let us now kill him." Fortunately, two of his brothers had more compassion and did not want to kill him. Instead, they sold him.

If you were Joseph, would you have been able to understand all of this? Of course, in hindsight, we could say that he should thank God because he would become prime minister of Egypt through all of this. But at that time, Joseph had no idea what would happen tomorrow. When he was about to be sold, he pleaded with his brothers in anguish and with tears (Gen 42:21). He was sold like cattle.

### JOSEPH AS SLAVE AND PRISONER

After Joseph was brought to Egypt, he was sold as a slave to Potiphar. Most people would ask God, "Why did this happen? Why me?"

Joseph must have thought about Abraham, his great-grandfather, whom God promised a great blessing. God revealed to Isaac that there would be a famine. Jacob wrestled with God Himself. But what about Joseph? If you study the Bible carefully, you'll notice that God never appeared to Joseph nor spoke to him.

Here we see Joseph as a slave; however, he was not crushed by slavery. He could not understand why he was a slave, but he accepted it. He could not understand the situation he was in, but he accepted it. That was why he was able to become the best slave. He fell from the status of beloved son to slave, but he was not overcome by the tragedy. He became the steward of his master's house, and God's blessings followed wherever he went.

In Genesis 39:1, it states that God was with him. There seems to be a contradiction here, because if God was with Joseph, why was he a slave? But Joseph accepted it even though he could not understand why. He revered God, and God was with him.

Later on, Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, but he refused to sin with her. Out of spite, she framed him, accusing him instead of trying to take advantage of her. Joseph was then thrown into prison. Joseph was like a person getting struck down again and again as he tried to get up. The first time, his brothers struck him. The second time, he was struck down by his fear of God. It seemed like the harder he worked, the worse his situation became. He became a slave through no fault of his own. Now he was thrown into prison for a sin he did not commit.

However, the story states repeatedly that the Lord was with Joseph (Gen 39:20). Joseph did not understand, yet he accepted his situation. He became the model prisoner and, once again, he transcended his miserable situation.

One morning, Joseph noticed two prisoners, the king's butler and baker, looking very sad. He must have transcended his difficult situation in order to show his concern for others' problems. For instance, if you've just lost ten million dollars, it is unlikely that you would notice other people's suffering. But Joseph noticed these two prisoners, showed his concern, and helped them by interpreting their dreams.



## Worksheet #3

Joseph interpreted the butler's dream and told him that he would be restored to his original position. He asked the butler to "remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to the Pharaoh, and get me out of this house" (Gen 40:14). Notice how many times Joseph mentions the word "me" in his request. He wanted so much to leave this prison and return home; he was not happy.

Afterward, Joseph must have thought that this was an opportunity from God to leave the prison. Since only God can give the wisdom to interpret dreams, he probably thought that God wanted to rescue him from prison. The butler brought wine to Pharaoh every day, and he would be able to bring his request before him. The butler was his only hope for freedom.

But after the butler left and was restored to his position, he "did not remember Joseph, but forgot him" (Gen 40:23). To say "did not remember" and "forgot" is repetitive. This was written purposely, to show that it was God's will. It was impossible that the butler could have forgotten! Every day, as he bore the cup, he must have remembered how he got out of prison and how Joseph explained the dream. How could he forget something like that? But he did. Joseph waited day after day in prison, hoping that, each time the jail door opened, it would be to release him.

### JOSEPH AS PRIME MINISTER

One day, two days, one month, one year, two years passed. The butler forgot about Joseph for two whole years (Gen 41:1) until Pharaoh had a dream that greatly troubled him. Then, the chief butler said he remembered Joseph and that he had fault (Gen 41:9). His remark shows that he did not intentionally forget about Joseph. He quickly called for Joseph, and Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream. Pharaoh then made Joseph prime minister to oversee all the affairs of Egypt, second in command only to Pharaoh.

Joseph was thirty years old when he became prime minister (Gen 41:46). If we assume that he was seventeen when he was sold into Egypt (Gen 37:2), he suffered for thirteen years. How many "thirteen years" do we have in our lives? Have we spent thirteen years as a slave or prisoner? What kind of person would we become after this experience? Very few people would want to go to prison for thirteen years, even if they could become prime minister afterward.

### Trying to Forget

Later, Joseph married. Marriage is a turning point in life; to have children is an even greater turning point.

meaning "God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house" (Gen 41:51). But did he truly forget? When he said "forget," he remembered all the more. The more we try to forget about an incident in our lives, the more we remember. Even if we don't stay angry at something, we will not forget it. Even if we forgive, we cannot forget. We can forgive others, but we will not forget them.

If Joseph had really forgotten all those trials, he would not try to forget. He named his second son Ephraim, which means "fruitful." He wanted to forget his past and start a new beginning, but that did not resolve anything. Even though he had that kind of resolution, could he forget the wickedness of his evil brothers and his sorrow the last thirteen years? No, he could not forget.

### JOSEPH'S PATH TO FORGIVENESS

#### From Revenge

When Joseph was prime minister, a famine struck the whole land. His brothers came to buy food from him. Joseph sat up there as prime minister, and his brothers bowed down to him. Joseph remembered the two dreams he had before. After thirteen years, he was now wearing splendid garments, and his brothers were still shepherds.

"Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them" (Gen 42:7). As a prime minister, many people came to him each day to ask for food. If he did not look carefully, how could he recognize them? Yet, he recognized them, because he did not forget them.

Joseph spoke to them roughly, saying, "Where do you come from?" Of course, he knew where they were from. Once he remembered the past, did he forgive? No, things were not yet resolved. Joseph began to take revenge on his brothers. He said to them, "You are spies!" (Gen 42:9). In those days, spies were beheaded. An eye for an eye—they wanted to kill him before.

Joseph put them all in prison for three days. Those three days were probably very terrible for his brothers, because they did not know what would happen to them. In those three days, Joseph probably also struggled greatly.

But on the third day, Joseph brought the brothers out of prison and said to them, "I fear God" (Gen 42:18). Joseph feared God. It doesn't necessarily mean that a person who fears God will never get angry. But a person who fears God will control himself and will not harm people out of anger. To Struggle

When this happened, the brothers' consciences rebuked them. They immediately thought back to their sin of selling Joseph (Gen 42:21). After twenty-two years, the brothers were still haunted by guilt.

The brothers spoke in Hebrew, and they thought Joseph did not understand. But Joseph understood. When he heard that his brothers were conscience-stricken for what they had done to him, he was greatly moved,

## Worksheet #4

because Joseph feared God. If he were a person with a heart of stone, he would want to repay his brothers with more harm.

Joseph “turned himself away from them and wept.” People weep because they are not emotionally balanced—too happy, too sad, too frustrated, etc. Joseph released some of his heavy burdens by crying. However, he was not able to wash away everything. He was still unable to face his brothers. He went away from them to weep, and, afterward, he returned to them, gave them food, and sent them home.

## To Release

The second time, his brothers brought Benjamin his younger brother. When Joseph saw Benjamin, he quickly went into his room to weep. This time, he wept even more and he had to make haste, in case he was discovered. And after weeping, he even had to wash his face. Every time he wept, he released a little bit of his brothers as well as himself. If you cannot forgive someone, you are actually in bondage yourself.

The third time, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. This time, there was even more haste, but he could not escape. There was no time to run. Now Joseph could not restrain himself in front of all the people, so he made everyone go out from in front of him. He could not run somewhere else to cry, so he asked someone else to run.

“And he wept aloud”—he wept for all the years of bondage and affliction. He did not want others to hear him, but everyone heard. The Egyptians and also the house of Pharaoh all heard it because he cried so loudly. Joseph had tried to forget, but he could not. But Joseph wanted to forgive, because he feared God.

He said, “I am Joseph, does my father still live?” His brothers were terrified, but Joseph said to them, “Do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life” (Gen 45:5). How can we forgive others? We need to gradually comprehend and understand the will of God for allowing the situation. At that moment Joseph understood there was a higher will of God for him. But Joseph’s realization did not come until after three or four times of weeping and about twenty years of affliction. It was not that easy for him to do.

Joseph wept when he reunited with his father and again when his father passed away.

Joseph wept much, and through his tears, he forgave and liberated his brothers. But his brothers did not understand that he had already forgiven them. After their father died, they became nervous. They thought that Joseph did not harm them because their father was still alive. So they sent messengers to Joseph saying, “I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and

their sin; for they did evil to you” (Gen 50:17). Joseph wept again. After he wept, he spoke words of kindness and comfort to his brothers. After this long, they still carried the burden with them.

You must liberate others in order to liberate yourself. You cannot forget the wrongs that others have done to you, but you must forgive and liberate them. If you don’t, they will also become a burden to yourself. When you forgive them, God will also forgive you. When you release others, you will also be released.

This is why Joseph wept. (By H.H. Ko, Manna 39 Oct - Dec 2002)



**Now, think about the following questions:**

1. *Who has hurt you deeply?*
  
2. *Do you harbor feelings of hatred?*
  
3. *If you have been deeply hurt or offended by someone, you need to make a list of all the positive benefits that have come out of the pain you have carried. While focusing on these positive benefits, you need to ask God to change your heart with the power of the Holy Spirit. Ask God to change your heart from one of hatred to one of forgiveness toward the person who hurt you. Only then will you be free to experience and enjoy a life of happiness and abundance.*

Worksheet #1

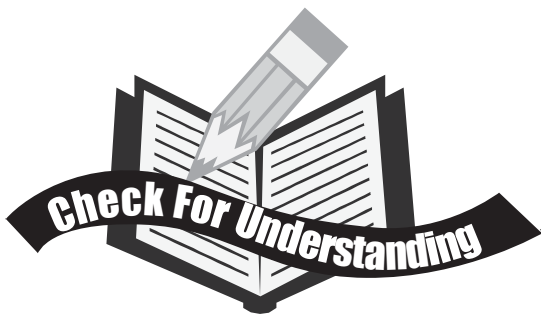
## Warm Up

Read Matthew 4:1-11, one verse at a time.

- 1) Put a squiggly line under the three temptations Satan used on Jesus Christ.
- 2) Put a triangle by the place where each temptation happened.
- 3) Circle the responses Jesus Christ made to Satan's temptations.
- 4) Underline anything that tells us that Jesus Christ knew the Bible well.

- Do you know that temptations are a normal part of life?
- Why do you think our lives are so filled with temptations?
- No one likes temptations. What possible value might temptation have in our lives?

We face temptation every day. And dealing with them can be tough. Today's passage talks about three tough temptations that Jesus Christ faced--and how He overcame them.



1. What were the three temptations Satan posed to the Lord Jesus?
2. Satan also used the Scriptures when he tempted the Lord Jesus – how did he manage to turn God's words into temptations?
3. Our Lord Jesus overcame the temptations by using the Scriptures too. What does this teach us about how to fight temptations?

## Questions to Discuss:

1. Why do you think Satan waited until Jesus Christ had fasted 40 days to attack? What can you learn from this?
2. Satan didn't really want bread from stones. What did he want in his first temptation of Jesus Christ?
3. It is easy to see why Satan's first temptation might have been tempting. What kinds of physical temptations do you face today?
4. Satan didn't want to see a miraculous rescue in the second temptation. What did he really want?
5. Write the second temptation in a way that it might come to you today.
6. At first glance, Satan's third temptation doesn't really apply to us. But if most Christian teens were honest, what things do you think they love more than God, and worship before Him?
7. Which temptation do you think was hardest for Jesus Christ? Explain.
8. What would have happened if Jesus Christ had given in to Satan's temptations?
9. How are the three responses Jesus Christ gave alike?
10. Satan stopped each temptation when Jesus Christ used the Bible. Why do you think this happened? What can we learn from this?
11. How was the way that Jesus Christ used Scripture different from the way Satan used it?
12. Jesus Christ used Scripture to help Him through Satan's difficult temptations. What does this tell you about Bible study and memorization?



# Handling Temptations

## Life Application

### Scenario 1

Jenny is on her way to a friend's party from school. Jenny doesn't suspect anything before, but the first thing she notices when she enters the room at the party is the smell of beer and alcohol.

"You have drinks here?"

"Sure," her friends reply.

### Scenario 2

Renee stayed out past her curfew and is worried about what her parents will say. Her friend at school has told her to tell them that they had an accident on the highway and were held up. What should Renee say?

### Scenario 3

Nathan is walking to a football game with two friends. One of them spots a car with its key in the ignition. "Hey," he says, "Let's take this thing for a ride." The other friend quickly agrees, and the two pile in. "Well, come on, Nathan," his friends say.

## Role Play!

There are four reasons why Scripture is a valuable tool for countering temptation.

1. Scripture gives us examples of people who resisted temptation as we can follow their examples.
2. Scripture tells us the boundaries for our actions. It lets us know what is right and what is wrong.
3. Scripture gives us guidelines on how to fight temptation, such as fleeing from evil and praying so that we don't fall into temptation.
4. Scripture gives us godly values and attitudes so that by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, we don't desire many of the things that used to tempt us.

★ What do you think is the most important reason Scripture is a valuable tool for overcoming temptation?

## Discussion:

1. How do you think the teen feels at this moment?
2. What makes this situation such a difficult one?
3. How do you think the teen could handle this situation?
4. Not giving in to temptation takes real strength. What are some ways we could prepare ourselves to not give in to difficult temptations we will encounter in the future?

*The next time you are faced with the most difficult temptation, ask yourself the following questions.*

1. *What time of day is it?*
2. *Where are you?*
3. *Who is around?*
4. *How have you reacted in the past in this situation?*
5. *Is it possible to leave the situation and avoid the temptation?*
6. *If you can't leave the situation, how would you like to react to the situation?*

### IN THE WORLD WE LIVE IN TODAY,

there is a lot of swearing going around. It may not be swear words hurled intentionally at a particular person during a fight. In fact, if we were to stand back and observe, we'd notice that people use swear words so frequently that no one even takes offense at times. As Christians, we are probably aware that we should avoid getting into verbal disputes with anyone. But, do we check ourselves against using any swear words in our daily conversations?



One day, a seven-year-old brother came back home and asked his mom, "Mommy, tell me what the 'B-word' and the 'F-word' are! All my friends laugh at me because I do not know what those words are." His mother did not know how best to answer him, except to tell him that those words are bad words and he should never ever use them. This incident goes to tell us that using swear words (even when not swearing in real disputes) is common. As Christians, we must guard ourselves against this trend.

### HOW IMPORTANT IS SPEECH IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOTH GOD AND PEOPLE?

Read James 3:2-12 and discuss the following questions:

#### 1) The perfect man (v. 2)

- What does this passage say about "the perfect man"?
- How is the tongue related to all other aspects of our spiritual cultivation, such that the one who can control his tongue can control his whole body?
- Do you think it is possible to be "perfect" by this definition?
- If not, do you think it's possible to come close to that standard?

#### 2) Metaphors used to describe the tongue (v. 3, 4, 5)

- James uses different metaphors to describe the tongue. Identify these metaphors.
- Are these metaphors aptly used?
- How is the tongue like each of these metaphors he compared it to?

#### 3) The tongue is "full of deadly poison" (v. 8)

- What are the ways a tongue can do damage and "poison" people?
- Have you done damage with your tongue before?

- What were the consequences?
- How did you feel after that event?
- In hindsight, do you think you could have done better in the same situation?
- 4) We use our tongues both to bless and to curse (v. 9 – 12)
  - Is your tongue a spring that sends forth fresh water or one that sends forth bitter water?
  - Other than praising God, how else can we put our tongues to good use?
  - Give examples of blessings or gracious words that we can use our tongues for.



1) Give 3 metaphors used by James to describe the tongue.

2) In what ways can the tongue be "deadly"?

3) In what ways can the tongue be used for blessing?

# Concerning Our Tongues

## 1) Proverbs 10:19

It is logical to think that the more we speak the more chances there are for saying the wrong things. One scenario I can think of is when I hang out with my friends. Often, the conversations go into topics related to people rather than just events/things. And, in a group, with one person saying one thing, and another adding on details, it can easily get out of hand and we lapse into gossiping. Once, I was with a friend who was really mad at someone about something. She started to talk about all the things that the person had done in the past (which was not related to the current incident). First, I agreed with the things she said. Then I found myself joining in the "verbal bashing" of that person, behind her back. It just came naturally. It's hard to check ourselves when we're in a group. So, it's best to have self-control about how much we talk. The less we talk, the less opportunity there is for saying the wrong things.

For the following verses, write down an example in your life whereby you can apply the teaching. Then, share your examples with the rest of the class. The first one has been done for you as an illustration of the task.

## 2) Proverbs 15:1

## 4) Ecclesiastes 5:1, 2

## 6) Matthew 12:36, 37

## 5) Matthew 5:33-37

## 7) Ephesians 5:4

## 8) Colossians 4:6

### Stories Concerning Speech

#### A TESTIMONY

Jean works as an administrative assistant in a relatively large department in her firm. Her job requires her to deal with many different levels of the staff. As such, she has to handle all kinds of people in a typical day at work. There are some who are usually nice and gracious. But, there are also others who are often impatient and make unreasonable demands. Sometimes, when work pressure builds up in the office, people can get rather quick-tempered and even unpleasant in their speech.

Jean understands that as a Christian, she must put God before herself. That means she should shine for God and glorify God's name before her own pride and feelings. To be gracious in her speech and mild-tempered amid all kinds of stress is her constant prayer. In her office, no matter whom she deals with, she tries her best to always be courteous and gentle in her speech. To her, this is but her basic Christian duty.

Little did she realize that her gracious ways have touched the heart of one of her co-workers. One day, this co-worker came up to her and asked her, "Which church do you go to? May I go with you to your church for service?" Jean was really surprised. She had never preached to this co-worker before. Why would this co-worker ask to go with her to our church? When she asked why, the co-worker told her that she had observed that her conduct has been extraordinary and believed that she must have come from a very good church.

*This testimony shows us the importance of our speech and conduct in our everyday lives.*

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- 1) What types of people did the person have to deal with?
- 2) What was the incident about or what type of situation was involved?
- 3) What did you think was going through the mind of the person when the incident happened?
- 4) What did the person do?
- 5) What were the reactions of the other people who were present?
- 6) If it is a reverse-example, what do you think the person could have done differently?

#### Constructing Your Own Story

Having read the testimony, it is now your turn to share a testimony. If it is a good testimony, we can emulate the good example. If it is a "reverse-example," i.e. a testimony about some mistake or an incident that did not glorify God's name, we can also learn from it and not follow in the same footsteps. As you write your testimony or a testimony of someone you know, pay attention to the questions in the box to the right. You should not mention the names of the people involved in your narration.

### LYING

-- an abomination to God

We have always heard that Christians should not lie. Do you know any specific verses from the Bible that tell us directly that we should not lie, or that lying is abominable in the eyes of God? Let us first take a look at a few Bible verses that warn against lying. Then we will take a look at a few biblical events when people lied and study the consequences.

#### Biblical

#### Warnings

#### Against

#### Lying

1.

**"Thou shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Ex 20:16)**

What does it mean to "bear false witness" against someone?

Why do you think God includes this as one of the Ten Commandments?

It is often said that the last six of the Ten Commandments have to do with God's requirement of us in our relationships with our fellow humans. How you think this commandment is related to a Christian's interaction with others on earth?

2.

**"These six things the Lord hates .....a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren." (Prov 6:16-19)**

- In this passage, six other vices are mentioned. In fact, these seven abominations to God are not completely separate. Discuss how they are related to one another.

3.

**"Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel." (Prov 20:17)**

- Other than the literal meaning of "bread," what else do you think could be a sweet gain that can be attained through deceit?

4.

**"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron." (1 Tim 4:1, 2)**

- What does it mean to "speak lies in hypocrisy" and to have one's conscience "seared with a hot iron"?

- Can you think of examples that illustrate this?

- If we look around in our world today, do we see people who have profited from deceitful means? Can you give a few examples?

- Have you seen these people's mouths "filled with gravel" (as in they suffered bad consequences for their deceit)?

- Read Ecclesiastes 12:14. What does this verse tell us about gains from deceit?

## Lies, Gossip and Truthfulness

## Bible Study

BIBLICAL INCIDENTS  
OF LYING

Rev 12:9/ Gen 3:1-7/ In 8:44

## The Serpent Lied

-- the beginning of sin

- What do you think can be said about the relationship between liars and the "serpent of old . . . the Devil"?
- What does this say about the severity of lying?

## Jezebel Framed Naboth

Read 1 Kings 21:1-24

- What were the motivations behind the lies of Jezebel?
- What was God's reaction towards the lies set up by Jezebel?

## Ananias and Sapphira

--- lied to the apostles and to the Holy Spirit

Read Acts 5:1-10

- Since it was not a requirement that believers had to offer all they had (v. 4), why do you think Ananias and Sapphira lied?
- What did Peter equate lying to the apostles with, in verses 3 and 9?
- What would be a modern-day equivalent of the kind of lying that Ananias and Sapphira committed?

## Gehazi Lied to Elisha

Read 2 Kings 5:14-27

- Why do you think Elisha rejected the gifts of Naaman?
- What was the punishment upon Gehazi?
- Were the consequences suffered by Gehazi for lying worth the amount of gifts he coveted?

## Check For Understanding

BE FOREWARNED  
AGAINST GOSSIPING

Read the following Bible verses and discuss how we can apply these teachings in our daily lives.

1. EPH 4:15
2. MT 12:36, 37
3. 2 COR 1:18, 19
4. PROV 29:11

- 1) How is the 9th commandment related to the other Ten Commandments? What do you think is the cause of lies?
- 2) What did Jezebel do to obtain the vineyard of Naboth? Besides lying, what else was wrong with her heart?
- 3) Why did Gehazi lie? Are there parallels in the Bible or in people around you who lie to receive gain, like Gehazi?
- 4) Who lied to the Holy Spirit? What would be considered lying to the Holy Spirit today?
- 5) What does it mean to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15)?



## Lies, Gossip and Truthfulness

## Life Application

## Case A

Ann works for a research institute. She has to run tests and she handles a lot of data in her work. One day, her boss gives her a very important project. If she does well, she will definitely gain favor in the eyes of her boss. She would also have more opportunities in the future to take on more important projects, and get a raise in her salary. One afternoon, she discovers a mistake that has gone unnoticed in the earlier stages of that project. It is a mistake made by her assistant. If both of them keep quiet, no one would ever know. Ann finds herself in a big dilemma. If she reports it to her boss, she will have to take the blame and that would not be a favorable position to be in. But she knows keeping things under cover is not the right thing to do.

## Questions

- 1) What are the possible reactions of her boss if Ann were to report her mistake?

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- 2) What would you do if you were in Ann's shoes?

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*We are going to look at three cases of real-life situations that brothers and sisters in church have encountered.*

1. Read about their situations.
2. Then, answer the questions which follow.
3. Next, your teacher will tell you what the brother/sister actually did and what happened in the end.
4. Discuss your answers in (2) with the rest of your class, in the light of the ending.

## Case B

When John was in middle school, he hung out a lot with a group of friends from school. Together, they frequented arcades and would spend hours and hours there. A number of times, he even skipped classes with them and simply went around malls, wasting their hours away. On days when he came home really late, he would tell his parents that he had some discussion with friends about school projects. When his grades suffered, his parents were really worried. At first, John lied to them that the exams were really hard and that the others in his class did poorly too. But, when his poor grades persisted, his parents suspected something was going on. When they found out that he had skipped classes, they were furious. This led to more arguments and a few times, John even threatened to leave home. Sometimes, when arguments got really bad, he would simply go over to a friend's house and spend the night. His parents were so worried for him, but they did not know how else to help him other than pray for him.

## Questions

- 1) What do you think would be the best methods to counsel John?

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- 2) If you were a classmate of John, and you happened to know about his situation, what advice would you give to him?

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- 3) If John were in your RE class, what do you think you would do to help him?

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## Case C

## Questions

During a meeting among co-workers in church, a conflict arose. After that meeting, one of the two members who had that conflict started telling many people in church that the sister said something really unkind to him, even using some bad language. People who heard his side of the story were horrified that the sister would say such things. They started to tell it to others, without first ascertaining if what they heard was true. So, it ended up that more and more people got to know about the incident. When news spreads, it always gets to the involved party. The sister heard about the things that were being said about her. She knew it was not the truth. But how was she going to explain herself? News had spread to so many different people, even people not from her local church. She felt very hurt. For a long time, she didn't know how to face the people in church. She felt that they were too gossipy and gullible to believe only one side of the story. She started to skip church services, simply because she wanted to avoid them.

*If you were one of those at the meeting, and you heard the rumors that were going around, what would you do?*

1

*If you were one of those who heard one side of the story, what do you think you should do?*

2

*How would you encourage the sister, who felt she was completely misunderstood and victimized?*

4

*How would you encourage the brother who went around telling his side of the story?*

3

## Memory Verse Test

For the following Bible references, write out the memory verse, and explain how this verse relates to your life today.

Some parts of the verses have been given to you as hints to help you.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 (Lesson 3)

"Remember now \_\_\_\_\_ in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, " I have \_\_\_\_\_ in them."

*Relation to my life today:*

Matthew 6:19, 21 (Lesson 6)

"Do not lay up for yourselves \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, where \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ destroy and where \_\_\_\_\_ break in and steal."

*Relation to my life today:*

Ephesians 4:29 (Lesson 11)

"Let no \_\_\_\_\_ proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary \_\_\_\_\_, that it may impart \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_."

*Relation to my life today:*

How much of the past 12 lessons do you remember?

What are the main themes we have covered?

Which lesson is most memorable for you?

Do you remember the memory verses?

Colossians 1:10 (Lesson 2)

"That you may walk worthy of the Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ Him, being fruitful in every \_\_\_\_\_ and increasing in the \_\_\_\_\_ of God."

*Relation to my life today:*

Romans 12:2 (Lesson 4)

"And do not be conformed to \_\_\_\_\_, but be transformed by the \_\_\_\_\_, that you may prove what is that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of God."

*Relation to my life today:*

Colossians 3:13 (Lesson 9)

"Bearing with one another, and \_\_\_\_\_ one another, if anyone has a \_\_\_\_\_ against another; even as Christ \_\_\_\_\_ you, so you also must do."

*Relation to my life today:*

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

(Jas 1:14, 15)



"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking,  
correcting and training in righteousness."

2 Timothy 3:16

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**J2 YEAR 1 BOOK 3**