



Colossians 3:3
Your old life is dead.
Your new life, which is
your real life, even
though invisible to
spectators, is with
Christ in God. He
is your real life.

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BY

VARIOUS AUTHORS

COVER:

SAMUEL MORENO

DESIGN:

MACMOUSER GRAPHICS

EDITOR:

TIM LALE

LOGO:

SAMUEL MORENO

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Introduction

You are young. You want a better life. You have difficult situations. You have dreams, aspirations, and goals. These lessons are for you.

We will be studying the stories of some young people like you, some who left their homeland, who had experiences similar to yours, and from whom you can obtain valuable principles that can help you in life. To grow in the Christian life, a person needs to be real, genuine, and committed. Only God can make that happen in you. It is our desire that through the lessons that follow, you can find the real God, who gives meaning to your life and who wants to transform you.

Real Leadership

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men,—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”
EGW



REAL LEADERSHIP



DAVID IS PROMOTED

I

REVEAL

1 Samuel 16:12: “So Jesse sent for him. He was dark and handsome, with beautiful eyes. And the Lord said, ‘This is the one; anoint him.’ So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and anointed David with the oil. And the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.”

EXAMINE

1. Was God pleased with Saul, the king of Israel? 1 Samuel 15:27–28
2. What dangerous instructions did God give to Samuel? 1 Samuel 16:1–2
3. Whom did Samuel want to anoint as the next king? 1 Samuel 16:6–7. Why do you think God rejected Eliab, if he was the eldest son and a prominent warrior?
4. Did the family invite David to the party? 1 Samuel 16:11
5. Take note of the way that Jesse spoke of his son David. 1 Samuel 16:11

He called him _____

He called him _____

Do you think David’s father held him in high regard? How do you feel when you are not highly regarded, when you are ignored, when others dismiss you? How do you react?

6. What power came on David when he was anointed and set apart by Samuel? **1 Samuel 16:13.** How can you have that same power?



APPLY

This lesson teaches us three principles:

1. Talent is not enough. King Saul was tall and handsome. David's older brother was a good soldier and the firstborn in his family. However, they were rejected as leaders by God. Both had talent but lacked a godly character. God is looking for people who have a character like Jesus. Do you know someone who has many talents but is wasting them? What are you doing with the talents God gave you?

2. What matters is what God thinks of you. David's father did not think his son could be a king. In his mind, the only thing David could do was be a shepherd. As a young person, perhaps you have run into people who did not think much of you. Have you experienced discrimination? Have you experienced rejection? How do you react when others do not believe in you, when you are cast aside, when you are ignored or passed over for a promotion?

3. To be where you want to be, give your best where you are. David was the best shepherd he could be. He was a leader and a musician, even though they had him tending sheep. He did not become bitter or give less than excellent effort. He did everything with enthusiasm and humility, and God promoted him in His time. Do you think you're at the place in your work, school, or life where you want to be? What kind of attitude do you have while waiting for a better opportunity? Are you giving your best where you are?

LIVE

This week, give your best where you are. Remember that even if others do not recognize your effort, talent, or work, God does. Have faith that, in time, God will promote you.



REAL LEADERSHIP



DAVID IS TESTED

II

REVEAL

Psalm 142:3: "When I am overwhelmed, you alone know the way I should turn. Wherever I go, my enemies have set traps for me. I look for someone to come and help me, but no one gives me a passing thought! No one will help me; no one cares a bit what happens to me. Then I pray to you, O Lord. I say, 'You are my place of refuge. You are all I really want in life.' "

EXAMINE

David had several tests in a short time.

1. What did David lose in one night? There are three important things he lost: His job. What did David do for a living? **1 Samuel 16:22-23**

His wife. Who was his wife? **1 Samuel 18:27**

His house. Where did David live? **1 Samuel 18:1-2**

Meditate a moment on the experience of David. How do you think it felt to lose, overnight, his job, house, and wife?

2. Where did David run to when he fled his home? **1 Samuel 19:18**. Who do you go to when you have problems in your life?

3. David had a close friend. What difficult decision did he make as a result of the persecution of Saul? **1 Samuel 20:41-42**

4. Where did David end up and what happened there? **1 Samuel 21:10-15**. (Note the attitude toward immigrants of the people who lived in Gath.)



5. Where does David end up and with whom? **1 Samuel 22:1-2**. Write the three groups here:

The _____

The _____

The _____

APPLY

Here are three points we can apply in our lives:

1. We attract what we are. When David was living in the cave, it was a very difficult time in his life and he was down. The people who approached him were also down on their luck—the people who had debts, the afflicted, those who had problems. What kind of people surround you? Who are your friends? If you want to change your life, change your friends! Friends say more about you than about them.

2. Do your best—be the best you can where you are. **First Samuel 22:2** says that David became captain over the people who came to him. In other words, he was their leader. If he could not be a leader in the palace, at least could be the best leader of the cave. Do you find it difficult to give your best when circumstances are less than favorable? How does your attitude reflect the problems in your life?

3. God gave everything back, even better than before. If we read the end of the story, we see God giving back to David all that was lost. That's why he could write **Psalms 142** [see "Reveal" above] when he was in the cave. What have you lost lately? What do you need God to give you back, better than before?

LIVE

This week, look at the people who are with you and around you. Ask yourself how you can become a leader to encourage, rather than a victim who suffers.



REAL LEADERSHIP



DAVID IS PROVOKED

III

REVEAL

1 Samuel 17:45-47: “David replied to the Philistine, ‘You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the Lord will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel! And everyone assembled here will know that the Lord rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the Lord’s battle, and he will give you to us!’ ”

EXAMINE

David had to overcome several obstacles and provocations before he could kill the giant.

1. David’s father, who tried to limit him. What did he ask David to do? **1 Samuel 17:17–18.** (Note that his father did not ask him to go into battle, only to carry out errands and bring back news.) Has someone ever tried to limit you? How did you react? Share your experience.

2. The soldiers, who talked a lot but did not fight. What routine did the soldiers engage in daily? **1 Samuel 17:20–21.** How did they react when Goliath appeared? **1 Samuel 17:24**

3. His oldest brother, who judged his motives. How did Eliab treat David publicly? **1 Samuel 17:28–29.** Why do you think he acted that way toward David?



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4. King Saul, who tried to have David do things his way. What was David's reaction as he tried on Saul's armor? **1 Samuel 17:38–39**

5. The words of Goliath to David. **1 Samuel 17:41–44**. How did Goliath speak to David? Note what he did: (a) provoked; (b) insulted; (c) mocked; and (d) cursed. How do you react when your friends make fun of your religion or insult God with curses?

APPLY

This lesson offers three principles you can act on:

- 1.** Do not let the people around you determine your actions. David ignored the limitations set by his father, the fear of the soldiers, the aggressiveness of his brother, and the controlling spirit of the king. He had a purpose, to kill the giant. How difficult or easy is it for you to ignore other people's criticism and pursue your goals and objectives?
- 2.** Defend the cause of God. Many times we find ourselves in situations where other people are hostile through their words and actions to the cause of God. To be silent in these times is to be complicit. How public is your faith in your school, work, or neighborhood?
- 3.** One person can make a difference. Sometimes we think that a person can't do much on their own. Today's story reveals that this is false. One person can, if they are guided by God. In which areas of your life are you frustrated because you do not receive support from others? Go ahead anyway!

LIVE

This week, decide to get up and defend the cause of God even when your decision is not popular. When you are alone and no one supports you, trust in God and do the right thing anyway.

PART 2

Real Dreams

“God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach.” —EGW



REAL DREAMS

JOSEPH IS CHOSEN

I

REVEAL

Genesis 37:5-7: “One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. ‘Listen to this dream,’ he said. ‘We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!’ ”

EXAMINE

1. What happened one night to Joseph, that he was motivated to tell his brothers about? **Genesis 37:5**
2. How did the brothers and their father react to Joseph’s dream?
 - a. His brothers _____ **Genesis 37:8**
 - b. His father rebuked him. **Genesis 37:10**
 - c. His brothers were jealous of him. **Genesis 37:11**
 - d. His brothers wanted to _____ **Genesis 37:19–20**
 - e. Eventually his brothers sold him into slavery. **Genesis 37:28**

Why do you think that other people get upset when you do well? How do you react when someone else is doing better than you?

3. What does the Bible say about how to achieve the dreams and desires God has for us? **Psalms 37:4**
4. What should you do about people who oppose and criticize your ideals and dreams? **Matthew 6:14**



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5. In what place did Joseph's dreams come true? **Genesis 37:36**. Even if you are in a place far away from home, what plans and dreams can God give you in a strange land?

APPLY

Take these points and use them in your life:

1. Not everyone will understand your dreams. Joseph's family did not accept the fact that he was special. God gives us dreams, but others may not understand and will try to derail the dreams God has given us. Can you think of an idea, dream, or wish you had that you shared with another but did not find support?
2. The paths of God are not the same as you might want or even imagine. God told Joseph that he would be a leader, but did not tell him where or when. Joseph never could have imagined that he would be a leader in a strange land. Perhaps you have come to this country as an immigrant and do not know what God wants for your life. How does Joseph's story help us to have faith in God's plan and not despair?
3. God will always find someone to protect you. In the story of Joseph, we see that God put certain people in place to protect and help Joseph. The young man went through testing but was never alone. Who supports you? Who can you turn to when you are in trouble?

LIVE

This week, do not let others kill your dreams. When you have critics, forgive and love them.



REAL DREAM



JOSEPH IS JAILED II

REVEAL

Genesis 39:19: "Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained. But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed."

EXAMINE

1. What did Potiphar do after hearing his wife's lie about Joseph? **Genesis 39:20**. Do you think that the imprisonment of Joseph was fair? How do you react when someone accuses you unfairly?
2. One phrase is repeated twice in this story. What is the phrase that gives us confidence even in times of difficulty? **Genesis 39:21, 23**
3. Joseph could have been discouraged and declared himself a victim of injustice. Instead, what did he do? **Genesis 39:22–23**
4. Is it easy or difficult for you to give your best when the circumstances around you are not the best? How can you experience the love of God even in your worst moments?
5. Joseph eventually became leader of Egypt. How did the time spent in prison prepare him for future leadership?



APPLY

The lesson presents three principles for your life:

- 1. God leads.** God knew that Joseph was going to jail. That was the preparation that Joseph needed for later on in his life. The contacts he made in prison connected him with the palace. Sometimes we have to descend in order to go higher. Why is it so hard for us to believe or understand that God continues to be in control when we are going through hard times?
- 2. God is with you.** Twice in the passage, the Bible includes the phrase “God was with Joseph.” It seems strange, because a prison cell is not the first place that comes to mind when you think of the love and presence of God. Can you share with the group a moment in your life when you felt God or saw Him act in a place out of the ordinary?
- 3. God prospers you.** The secret of prosperity is to have a relationship with God and not allow yourself to become embittered by negative circumstances. How is your attitude lately?

LIVE

This week, when something bad happens to you, think: “This is just the prelude to the great blessing that God has for me.” Something big is coming your way. Are you ready?



REAL DREAM



JOSEPH IS RESPONSIBLE

III

REVEAL

Genesis 41:37: "Joseph's suggestions were well received by Pharaoh and his officials. So Pharaoh asked his officials, 'Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?' Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are. You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours.' "

EXAMINE

1. How did a pagan king receive the suggestions from a former convict?

Genesis 41:37

2. What was it that convinced Pharaoh that he should listen to Joseph?

Genesis 41:38. In what way can you see the Spirit of God in Joseph's life?

3. Pharaoh called Joseph two things: wise and intelligent. What is the difference between these two words?

4. Joseph, an immigrant, without many friends or any help from his family, became the second most powerful in the kingdom. What message do you think God wants to give us through that story?

5. Study with me for a moment the word favor. The biblical meaning of the word is that God looks on one of His children in a special and meaningful way. How can you attract the favor of God into your life? **2 Chronicles 16:9; Proverbs 11:27; Proverbs 12:2**



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APPLY

Take these ideas and make them work for your life:

- 1.** Your testimony gives you authority. Joseph spoke with authority because the Spirit of God was with him and in him. The gospel is demonstrated by our actions, not our words. How can you as a Christian improve your testimony?
- 2.** More than “friends in high places,” you need the Lord. Joseph was not well connected, and his promotion came directly from God, who ordained a masterfully orchestrated plan to bless him and get him out of prison. What is the danger in self-promotion instead of seeking the promotion of God?
- 3.** The key to God’s favor is to walk with Him. As you walk closer to Jesus, you can clearly perceive His plan. Strive to please God, and you will have His favor. Even though salvation is by grace, why is it important to walk in obedience to experience God’s favor?

LIVE

This week, seek to be obedient, and do not indulge in self-promotion. Let God promote you.

Real Transformation

None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. —EGW



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM DISEASE TO HEALTH

I



Marcos 5:24-34: And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.



1. Read together **Mark 5:25-26**. The Bible says that this woman had “suffered a lot.” How do you think the disease had affected the most important areas of her life?

- a. In her role as a wife: _____
- b. In her work: _____
- c. In the church: _____

2. What was the plan this woman came up with as she searched for healing?
Mark 5:27-28

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3. How long did it take for Jesus to heal her disease? Mark 5:29
4. What attitude did the woman have when Jesus “discovered” what she had done? Mark 5:33
5. The woman received two blessings from Jesus that day. Can you identify them? **Mark 5:34**
 - a. Emotional Blessing: _____
 - b. Physical blessing: _____

APPLY

1. What events in your life are causing you pain right now? Write them here.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
2. What are your plans to solve the problems that affect you?

3. In what areas of your life do you feel fear at the moment?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
4. What problem would you want Jesus to touch this “instant”?

LIVE

Today we pray for healing, depending on the particular need, which may be physical, emotional, or spiritual. We learned that we have a God so great and merciful that He can heal. Ask with faith!



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM NOTHING TO EVERYTHING

II

REVEAL

1 Samuel 1:1–20. Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and



said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.

EXAMINE

1. Today's passage tells us that Hannah had three problems in her life. What were they?
 - a. Her husband had two _____ (1 Samuel 1:2)
 - b. Hannah could not have _____ (1 Samuel 1:3)
 - c. Her rival constantly _____ (1 Samuel 1:6)
2. Where did Hannah go despite having so many problems? **1 Samuel 1:9**
3. What promise did Hannah make to the Lord Almighty if He granted her a son? **1 Samuel 1:11**
4. Read the following verses and discover who was the only person who really understood the situation of Hannah:
 - a. Her rival tormented her (verse 7).
 - b. Her husband told her not to cry (verse 8).
 - c. Her spiritual leader scolded her (verse 13).
 - d. Her God did what for her? (verse 19).
5. How did God answer Hannah's prayer? **1 Samuel 1:20**

APPLY

1. In what ways are people in your life causing you suffering and pain?
-

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2. When you have problems, do you run to God and His church,* or tend to stay away from Him?

* If you want to learn more from the Bible about the true church and its role in the earth, ask your instructor, who will provide free study materials.

3. What is your most important request at this time? Write it here.

4. What commitment are you willing to make, if God answers your request?

LIVE

The prayer for this lesson is twofold:

1. Submit to the Lord as you present to Him your special requests.
2. Tell Him what your commitment to Him will be if your request is granted.

Now, pray!



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM DEATH TO LIFE

III

REVEAL

John 11:1–44: Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now,



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whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

EXAMINE

1. What problem were Martha and Mary experiencing? **John 11:3, 14**
2. How does the Bible describe death? **John 11:11-14**
3. How was the two sisters' attitude toward Jesus? **John 11:21, 32**

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4. Consider for a moment the feelings of Jesus (a Savior who really cares about people), and re-read **John chapter 11**, especially the verses listed below. Write in the space provided what Jesus must have felt.

a. Verse 5: _____.

b. Verse 33: Jesus is _____ and _____.

c. Verse 35: _____.

d. Verse 38: Jesus turned to _____.

5. God loves it when we cooperate with Him in His work. In the miracle that we have studied today, what was the role of Jesus and what was the role of Mary and Martha? **John 11:43-44**

Jesus _____ (verse 43)

Mary and Martha _____ (verse 44)

APPLY

1. How have you been able to feel the love of Jesus this week?
2. What differences do you notice between what the Bible says about the state of the dead and what people generally think?*

* If you are interested in studying more about what the Bible says about death, your instructor can give you free study materials. Ask and receive!

3. Sometimes we think that anger is a sin against God as we express our frustration to Him for not answering as we would like. Today we have seen that God is powerful enough to bear our sorrows. What request have you been submitting to God that has not been answered yet?

4. How can you cooperate with God? What attitudes, habits, or actions must be modified so that He can work with more freedom in your life?

LIVE

Today we pray to ask God for patience. Wait on His time, not yours. Let's pray!
REAL TRANSFORMATION From Sinner to Forgiveness



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM SINNER TO FORGIVEN

IV

REVEAL

John 8:1 – 11: Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

EXAMINE

1. What was the accusation made against the woman? **John 8:3–4**
2. How was the woman treated by different people after being caught in sin?
 - a. The man who had a sexual encounter with her disappeared (verse 3)



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

- b. The Pharisees _____ her (verses 3-4)
 - c. The law said that she should _____ (verse 5)
 - d. Jesus _____ (verse 11)
3. What counsel does Jesus give us about the importance of avoiding accusations and gossip? **John 8:7**
4. Can you imagine with me what Jesus wrote on the ground, causing everyone to leave? **John 8:8-9**
5. Jesus forgives the woman but at the same time gives her an instruction. What was it? **John 8:11**

APPLY

1. Have you ever been used or felt accused and abandoned? Share how you felt.
2. What difference did you notice in the treatment given to the man in this story (there was a man involved) and the way Jesus treated the woman? * How do you feel, knowing that Jesus can forgive all that you have done?
* If you want to study more about what the Bible says about forgiveness of sins, your instructor can get you absolutely free study materials.
3. Today's passage tells the story of a woman who had serious problems caused by sexual adventures. How have infidelity and promiscuity hurt you or your friends and family? Have you recovered from that situation or do you need God to heal the wounds that are still open?
4. Maybe you've tried many methods to change your life, but none has worked for you. Today there is only one person who can change you from the inside out. Who is it?

LIVE

So that Jesus can change your life, today you can follow three simple steps. They will help you confirm your decision for Him:

Step 1: Admit you are a sinner and ask God for forgiveness for your sins.

Step 2: Give control of your life to Jesus. From now on, He is your boss.

Step 3: You decide to live for Him, no matter what.

Let's pray and ask in faith. The same God who forgave the woman caught in sin can forgive you today. Believe it! It's real!



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM ANXIETY TO PROVISION

V

REVEAL

JOHN 2:1-12: And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: [but the servants which drew the water knew;] the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

EXAMINE

1. What huge concern did Mary and the wedding party have? **John 2:1-3**
2. What instructions did Mary give to the servants? **John 2:5**
3. What was the miracle that Jesus did for His mother and the new couple? **John 2:7-9**



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

4. Let's use our imagination. Put yourself in the place of the bride. How do you feel when"

- a. Someone comes to tell you that the wine is gone _____
- b. Mary goes to ask Jesus for help (remember: Jesus had not done a miracle before) _____
- c. Jesus performs the miracle _____
- d. Ten years later, when you're reminiscing and remember "the miracle at the wedding" _____

5. What purpose does God have when He performs a miracle in our lives?
John 2:11

He wants to reveal His _____
(wants you to know He can do it!)

He wants you to _____
in Him (this is the crucial part)

APPLY

1. Who did you go to when you had your last big problem? How did that person help you?

2. The mother of Jesus said to the servants at the wedding, "Do everything He tells you," and they did. What commandment of God's law* seems most difficult to obey for you? Why?

* If you want to study more about the commandments of God according to the Bible, and how obedience can bring blessing to your life, ask your instructor for course materials for free.

3. What situation are you going through right now where everything has failed and you do not have options and resources to continue or try and resolve it?

4. Are you ready to give complete control of your life to Jesus? What do you need to make that happen?

LIVE

Today we say to God in prayer that we are willing to do what He asks us, as requested. Jesus wants you to believe in Him, so you can see His power in action. Expect a miracle this week.



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM PROMISCUOUS WOMAN TO DISCIPLE

VI

REVEAL

John 4:6-29: Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in



truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

EXAMINE

1. What kind of relationship existed between the lineage of Jesus and that of the woman? **John 4:7-9**
2. The Samaritan woman had led a "wild life" (many husbands and little stability). What did Jesus offer her instead? **John 4:13-15**
3. What personal and direct request did Jesus make to her? **John 4:16-18**
4. What did Jesus reveal about Himself in the conversation with her?
John 4:25-26
5. How was her reputation changed after meeting with Jesus? **John 4:39**

APPLY

1. What kind of relationship do you have with people who are different from you in race, color, religion, or way of thinking?
 2. The Samaritan woman shared with Jesus her sad experience in love, and how often she was used and abandoned. In what ways do you identify with her? Is it easy or difficult for you to share with others your personal struggles?
 3. What situations have caused instability in your relationships or in your marriage?*
- * If you want to study more about marriage in the light of the Bible, ask your instructor to provide free study materials for you.
4. We all have areas in life of which we do not feel very proud. This often causes pain and, in many cases, anxiety. At times we may feel that these are out of control. Can you identify some of these areas in your life? How can God bring restoration and healing in them?

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

LIVE

Today we open our hearts to God, allowing Him to take control of our lives, even in those areas where no one has been allowed to enter. You can experience the health, restoration, and blessing that come only from Him. Let's pray together!



REAL TRANSFORMATION



FROM LOST TO SAVED

VII

REVEAL

Acts 16:11-15: Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

EXAMINE

1. Let's meet Lydia, a very special woman. According to today's passage, she had the following characteristics:
 - a. She liked to meet with other people to study the Bible (verse 13)
 - b. She was a businesswoman, a merchant and seller (verse 14)
 - c. She had a heart receptive to the voice of God (verse 14)
 - d. She proved to be a hospitable woman (verse 15)
2. When and where did Lydia meet for prayer services? **Acts 16:13.** The day and place are important. Why?



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

3. Where was Lydia when God “opened her heart”? **Acts 16:14**. God can reach you anywhere!
4. What important step did Lydia take after hearing the message? **Acts 16:15**
5. Who else was baptized along with her? **Acts 16:15**

APPLY

1. What did you learn from this study about the importance of attending church regularly, no matter the place or comfort level?

2. Do you think that God would have “opened the heart” of Lydia if she had resisted?

3. How close or far are you from surrendering your life to God and being baptized* as Jesus was?

* If you want to know more about baptism and what the Bible says about it, ask your instructor to provide free material on the topic.

4. How important is it to you that your family know Jesus and His truth? What steps are you taking for that to be a reality?

LIVE

Today we pray for God to put a heart of flesh in us and make us more sensitive to His voice when He calls. Perhaps this is the time to consider the decision to be baptized soon. If you agree, mark your answer with an X:

- I wish to join God and His church through baptism.
- I would like to write down my name for the next baptism.

Your group leader will explain to you what you need to do in order to make such an important step. Be brave and decide for Jesus today! Let's pray.

Real Plan

“By the plan of redemption, . . . a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit.” —EGW



REAL PLAN

PURPOSE

I

REVEAL

Jeremiah 29:11: “ ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.’ ”

EXAMINE

There are three negative consequences of not knowing why you exist. (Note: the texts are included here.)

1. If you do not know why you exist, you will always be exhausted, and your life will be tiresome. **Psalms 69:3:** “I am exhausted from crying for help; my throat is parched. My eyes are swollen with weeping.” What are you “tired” of lately?

2. If you do not know why you exist, your life will seem boring and pointless. **Ecclesiastes 1:8, 9:** “Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content. History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new.”

Which of these three statements best describes your current status? Mark one of the three.

I am in a great mood and know that with God's help I will do big things in my life.

I have fallen into a rut, but I have hope for my future.

I feel bored and my life seems pointless at this time.

3. If you do not know your purpose, you will become a negative person.



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

Ecclesiastes 1:14, 15: “I observed everything going on under the sun, and really, it is all meaningless—like chasing the wind. What is wrong cannot be made right. What is missing cannot be recovered.”

What dangers can becoming a negative person bring to our lives? Name two:

4. Which of these three feelings do you have at this stage of your life?

- feel tired Yes ___ No ___
- My life is boring and pointless Yes ___ No ___
- I have been very negative lately Yes ___ No ___



There are three benefits of understanding why you exist:

1. When you know your purpose, you will have goals in life. **Philippians 3:13:** “No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead.”

What are some goals that you have in the following areas?

Financial _____

Spiritual _____

Relationship _____

2. When you know your purpose, it will be easier to forget the past **Philippians 3:13:** “No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead.” Is it hard for you to forgive and forget, or does it come easily?

3. When you know your purpose, you are preparing for eternity. **Philippians 3:14:** “I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” How important are spiritual things for you? Do you feel they are a priority in the decisions you make, or are they secondary? Be honest.

4. Which of these three blessings do you need more right now in your life?

- Setting Goals _____
- Preparation for eternity _____
- Forgetting the past _____

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

LIVE

1. What area of your life do you need more help with at this time? How does it feel to know that God can make something beautiful of your life? What do you hope to learn during the coming weeks? Who can you invite next week? Write their name here:

2. Write your prayer requests on paper, and every week for the next four weeks, add requests and also praises when a request is answered.



REAL PLAN



WORSHIP

II

REVEAL

Romans 12:1: “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

EXAMINE

1. True worship involves dedication to God. Romans 12:1

This text helps us understand that worship has the following features:

Our worship must be voluntary, not forced.

We worship God not out of obligation but out of gratitude.

We worship God every day, with our whole lives, not only for a moment or a day.

What do you think when you hear the word worship? Why is it so important to worship God at all times, not just when we are in church?

2. True worship involves transforming to the image of God. Romans 12:2

What are some things “of this world” that are hard for you to leave behind?

Questions for discussion:

1. In what area of your spiritual life do you do things because you have to, not because you want to? Examples: attend vespers, read the Bible, pay tithe, forgive, help out in church.



2. Can you share with your group an area of your life where you see clearly that God has changed you in the past year?



Here are some ways you can truly worship God.

1. Change the way you think. You do that by asking the Holy Spirit to give you the mind of Christ. **1 Corinthians 2:16:** “Who can know the Lord’s thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?” But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.”

What do you think of constantly? Is it easy for you to forget your mistakes and failures, or do you constantly think about them and replay the events in your mind?

2. Change your attitude and learn how to be happy in any circumstance. **Philippians 4:11:** “I have learned to be content with whatever I have.” How can you be happy when bad things happen to you? What is your strategy to stay calm in the midst of your problems?

3. Change your habits. Claim the power of God to help you overcome. **Philippians 1:11:** “May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.”

What bad habit of yours does Jesus need to destroy? _____

What good habits do you need to start practicing? _____

LIVE

1. An important part of worship is expressing our praise to God out loud. All members of the group, on their knees and with eyes closed, can each say aloud a characteristic of God. For example:

“God, I praise You because you are holy.”

“Jesus, I praise You because You are my Savior.”

“Holy Spirit, I praise You because You are my guide.”

At the end, the leader will have a closing prayer.

2. Write prayer requests on paper every week, and remember to praise God when a request is answered.



REAL PLAN



RELATIONSHIPS

III

REVEAL

1 Timothy 3:14, 15: “I am writing these things to you now, even though I hope to be with you soon, so that if I am delayed, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

EXAMINE

There are five principles you need to know in order to improve your relationships:

1. We must be real people. Romans 12:9; Hebrews 4:12

Why, in your opinion, are so many people hypocritical? What can you do to not be one of them?

2. We must be courteous people. Romans 12:10; Titus 3:2

Many people think that the art of courtesy has been lost. What do you think? What practical things can we begin to do to be more polite?

3. We must be people who do their part with enthusiasm. Romans 12:11:

“Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.”

Which of the words in these two columns best describes you at work or school? Circle the ones that apply:

Moody

Happy

Apathetic

Spirited

Lazy

Enthusiastic

Flaky

Dependable

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

4. We must be people who show hospitality to those who have less. **Romans 12:13:** “When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.”

Name three things you can do as a group for those in need:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. We must be people who demonstrate unity and humility. Romans 12:16

How can we disagree with others in our opinions while being respectful and courteous?

Let’s review:

- a. Which of the previous areas do you feel strong in, and which are you weak in and need help?
- b. How, as a group, could you help someone this week in the church or community?

APPLY

1. In addition to going to school, Mary works at a cleaning company at night. When her name was proposed at church to be the leader of a small group, she said she had no time—she barely had a few hours available for personal business. One day, after listening to a sermon on discipleship, she questioned whether she had made the right decision. What should she do if she wants to be a disciple of Jesus and not just a member of a church? Why?

2. In Peter’s mind there is a conflict. His family, including his three teenage kids, have called him out because his only free time is on Sunday, and he spends that time in meetings at church. Someone said to him that church begins in the family, that spending time with family members should be the highest priority. Should the father neglect his congregation, where he has actively served, in order to better serve his family? Help Peter to find harmony between the two relationships—church and family.

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

LIVE

1. If the church is a family, what part of the family are we neglecting the most? What can we do as a group to change that reality?
2. Write prayer requests on paper, and praise God when a request is answered.



REAL PLAN



TRANSFORMATION IV

REVEAL

Philippians 2:12: “Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear.”

EXAMINE

God uses three tools to make you like Jesus.

1. The first tool is the Bible. **2 Timothy 3:16, 17**

Remember the following:

God’s will for your life is always in His word.

The will of God will never contradict the Bible.

Share with your group a Bible verse that has helped you in a situation of your life.

2. The second tool is the power of the Holy Spirit. **2 Peter 1:3; 2 Corinthians 3:17, 18**

What changes are you asking God to do in you lately? Have you seen progress?

3. The third tool is the circumstances of life, even the pain! **Romans 8:28, 29**
How has God used painful events in your life to teach you, or bring you closer to Him?

APPLY

There are three decisions that will help you be more like Jesus.

1. You can decide what you think. **Proverbs 4:23:** “Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.” **Ephesians 4:23:** “Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”
2. You can choose to rely on the Spirit in every moment and stay connected to God. **John 15:4:** “Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.”
3. You can decide how you will act when negative things happen in your life. **James 1:2:** “Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.”

LIVE

1. Share among the group the ways in which you study the Bible. Encourage each other to study the Bible more this week.
2. Write prayer requests on paper, and praise God when a request has been answered.

Real Healing

Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. —EGW



REAL HEALING



ENCOUNTER

I

REVEAL

Matthew 8:1–3: “Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. ‘Lord,’ the man said, ‘if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean.’ Jesus reached out and touched him. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be healed!’ And instantly the leprosy disappeared.”

EXAMINE

1. What had Jesus just finished doing when He met the leper? **Matthew 8:1**
2. What was the attitude of the leper when he asked to be healed of his disease? **Matthew 8:2**
3. Jesus did something significant for the leper (in addition to healing him) that showed His compassion and love for the man. What was it? **Matthew 8:3**
4. How long did it take Jesus to do the miracle? **Matthew 8:3**
5. Let us use our imagination to take us back to that day. Imagine that you were there, just to hear Jesus preach, and you were walking by His side when suddenly a leper appears. If you had been there, tell us:

What did you see? _____

What did you hear? _____

What did you smell? _____

How did you feel? _____



APPLY

There are some important applications in today's passage.

- 1.** Jesus always has time for you. Perhaps for us, one person whom nobody wanted, especially a leper, would have been easy for us to ignore or pass by without noticing. But Jesus did not behave that way. He has time for everyone. How do you feel, knowing that the God of the universe has time for you?
- 2.** Go to Jesus with requests, not demands. Jesus is not "Santa Claus" to whom we go with a list of things we want because we've been good. After seeing the leper's attitude in today's story, how important do you think is the way we ask for things?
- 3.** Jesus wants to transform us. Although our disease is not leprosy, it is equally fatal. If you go to Jesus and ask Him in faith, He can do for you what He did for that leper: transform your life. What is preventing you from going to Jesus today?

LIVE

- 1.** This week, find someone whom others are not interested in, and give him or her your friendship. Pray that God will guide you to the person who needs to feel God's love in practical ways.



REAL HEALING



TRANSFORMED

II

REVEAL

Matthew 9:9–13: “As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector’s booth. ‘Follow me and be my disciple,’ Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him. Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with such scum?’ When Jesus heard this, he said, ‘Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.’ Then he added, ‘Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: “I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.” For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.’ ”

EXAMINE

1. God is a transformer. When Jesus was on earth, He used His transforming power in various ways. Here are some of them:

Transformed the atmospheric conditions. **Matthew 8:26**

Turned water into wine. **John 2:8–9**

Transformed five loaves and two fish, fed thousands. **John 6:11–12**

God not only transforms the food or the weather. He transforms people!

2. What did Jesus ask Matthew to do? **Matthew 9:9**

3. What was the immediate reaction of Matthew? **Matthew 9:9**

4. After experiencing the transformation, whom did Matthew invite to his home? **Matthew 9:10**



5. What reaction did the religious leaders have when they saw the transformation of Matthew? **Matthew 9:11**

6. How did Jesus define His mission? **Matthew 9:13**

APPLY

1. Jesus invites all to be transformed. Nobody liked tax collectors. No one except Jesus. He invited the rich and poor, good and bad, saints and sinners. Do you know someone who believes that they have sinned so much that God cannot forgive them? How do you help that person understand that Jesus can still transform them?

2. Not everyone will be happy with the change. In today's text the Pharisees saw the change and, instead of rejoicing over it, they were upset. It is very likely that the same will happen to you. Who has opposed you since you started to walk with Jesus? How do you act toward that person?

3. God transforms us to help others. Matthew's friends were influenced positively by the change they saw in him. When you give God your heart, He works in your life to benefit not only you but also those around you. What person, close to you, do you want God to transform? Pray for them now.

LIVE

This week, pay special attention to people who spend time with you and do not know Jesus. Ask God to help you be a good influence on them.



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY THOUGHTS

III

REVEAL

“Matthew 9:1–7: “Jesus climbed into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town. Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, ‘Be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven.’ But some of the teachers of religious law said to themselves, ‘That’s blasphemy! Does he think he’s God?’ Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, ‘Why do you have such evil thoughts in your hearts? Is it easier to say “Your sins are forgiven,” or “Stand up and walk”? So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.’ Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, ‘Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!’ And the man jumped up and went home!”

EXAMINE

1. What miracle did Jesus do in this story? **Matthew 9:1–2**
2. What was the real problem of the Pharisees? **Matthew 9:4**

Note: Verse 4 tells us two important things that we must remember:

- a. Jesus knows what we think.
 - b. We decide whether we will “give place” to evil thoughts.
3. What does the Bible advise us about our thoughts? **Philippians 4:8**



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

4. How do you win the victory in the mind? There are two things you can do.

a. Not give a foothold to the _____.

Ephesians 4:27

b. Submit every thought to Jesus. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5**

5. What does God promise us that assures us victory? **Jeremiah 31:33**

APPLY

Here are three principles to apply in our lives:

1. Our actions are a product of our thoughts. The Pharisees “complained” (an action) because their minds were perverted by sin. If you want to change your life, change your way of thinking. What negative thoughts does Jesus need to transform in you today?

2. God will do His part, and you do yours. Our part is to not give a place to the devil; in other words, whenever a negative thought enters our mind, we must reject it in the name of Jesus. Consider the following example: A person is harassed by negative thoughts about self-esteem. How do you help them change their way of thinking? What advice would you give from the Bible about their value as a human being?

3. Jesus promises to make the change happen today. In the same way that Jesus has changed the minds of millions, He can change yours. Would you like to give Jesus your mind and your thinking and ask Him today to make you a positive person who is full of faith?

LIVE

Whenever a negative thought crosses your mind, at that very moment, say a prayer and give it to God. After several days, you will notice a difference in your thoughts. Come back next time ready to share the change that God is doing in your way of thinking.



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY WORDS

IV

REVEAL

Matthew 8:5-10: And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

EXAMINE

1. What was the pressing need of the centurion? **Matthew 8:5-6**
2. The centurion was accustomed to the power of words. He knew that a word from Jesus could make a difference. In thinking about the power of words, what kind of words we should avoid? **Ephesians 5:4**
3. Instead of gossip and criticism, what kind of words should be used?
 - a. Words that _____ God. **2 Chronicles 5:13**
 - b. Words that _____ our fellow man. **Colossians 3:16**
 - c. Words that _____ the devil. **James 4:7**
4. What element must accompany our words? **1 Thessalonians 1:5**
5. What did the words of Jesus do for the centurion's servant? **Matthew 8:13**



APPLY

1. The words of Jesus have the same power as His presence. We do not have the physical presence of Jesus among us now, but we have His Word. When we claim the promises of Jesus in our lives, we see the same power working in us that we would have if Jesus were physically present here with us. Can you share any problems you have at this point, that you need a word of Jesus to resolve?
2. Our faith is demonstrated by the way we speak. As we saw the faith of the centurion by the way he talked, other people are going to see our faith by how we express ourselves. Do you tend to be a person who speaks with faith, or do you feel that your faith is weak? How can you change the way you express yourself to speak with confidence and faith in God's promises?
3. Words without power are not effective. One of the texts today taught us that words must be accompanied by power. That means not just talking. While words reveal our faith, actions confirm our faith. We are to put our faith into action! Who do you know that talks a lot but does little? How annoying is that! How can you get that power you need for your words to be effective? Share your response with the group.

LIVE

1. Look for three people this week and say kind words to them, positive and spiritual. Start with your family!
2. Look at the person next to you and say something you admire or respect about them.



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY HABITS

V

REVEAL

Mark 5:1–6 : “So they arrived at the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus climbed out of the boat, a man possessed by an evil spirit came out from a cemetery to meet him. This man lived among the burial caves and could no longer be restrained, even with a chain. Whenever he was put into chains and shackles—as he often was—he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones. When Jesus was still some distance away, the man saw him, ran to meet him, and bowed low before him.”

EXAMINE

1. What were the destructive habits of the possessed man? **Mark 5:3–5**
 - a. He lived in the midst of _____ (verse 3).
 - b. He was a rebel, and no one could _____ (verse 4).
 - c. The man spent his life _____ (verse 5).
 - d. His body was cut up with _____ (verse 5).
2. Although he was possessed, what did the man do when he saw Jesus? **Mark 5:6**
3. Who was the real cause of the bad habits of the man possessed? **Mark 5:2**
4. Who is the only One who has the power to change your habits? **Mark 5:8**
5. What did the man become after Jesus changed him? **Mark 5:19–20**



APPLY

Let's look at three things you can do to be free of bad habits.

1. Go to Jesus just as you are. This man came to Jesus as he was—beaten, naked, wounded, possessed. He did not wait for his situation to improve to go to Jesus. If you want to be free from your bad habits, go to Jesus as you are today. What habit are you sure that Jesus wants to take away from you? Write it here: _____

2. Desire to be with Jesus. The man asked Jesus to let him be with Him. To be free from bad habits is not enough. You need to remain with Jesus. You need to want to be with Him always, in your daily life, when you are playing or in school. Once released does not mean forever free. The key is not only to begin a relationship with Jesus but to maintain it. What elements do you think are necessary to keep alive your relationship with Jesus? For example:

___ Reading the Bible ___ Praying ___ Witnessing ___ Fasting

3. Talk to others about Jesus. One of the most effective ways to keep your victory going is to develop the healthy habit of witnessing. A person who testifies is a person who does not have much time to relapse into the habits of their past life. What specific person can you invite to the group next week? Pray for them at this time. Write his/her name here: _____

LIVE

Practice the three secrets to victory this week. Study your Bible daily and without fail. Talk to God all day, and look for a person with whom you can share your faith. You will notice a change in your ability to say "No" to temptation! Pick someone in your group to be your prayer partner, and call or text each other every day to encourage each other.

My prayer partner is: _____

Their phone number is: _____



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY FINANCES

VI

REVEAL

Luke 19:1–4: “Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.”

EXAMINE

1. How wealthy was Zacchaeus? **Luke 19:1–2**
2. Although he was rich, what was really his greatest need? **Luke 19:3**
3. What two things prevented Zacchaeus from seeing Jesus? **Luke 19:3**
 - a. The large crowd
 - b. His small _____
4. Did Jesus ever mention the subject of money to Zacchaeus? **Luke 19:5–7**
5. What did Zacchaeus do that shows us his conversion was genuine? **Luke 19:8–10**




 APPLY

In order to have a healthy attitude toward money and finances, understand the following principles:

1. Even if you have money, you will always need something in your life. Zacchaeus, despite being a wealthy man, had no peace. He had heard of Jesus but did not know Him personally. Many people say they know about God but live as if they don't know Him. Hopelessness, anxiety, and bitterness can drown us as we try to fill the void in our heart with the wrong things.
2. There will always be obstacles in your life. Zacchaeus had two types of obstacles that prevented him from seeing Jesus. The first was the crowd, the second was his stature. Likewise, obstacles will prevent us from seeing Jesus. Some will be external in nature, such as finances, family, criticism, ridicule, or work. Others are internal, such as fear, insecurities, failures, and disappointments. Do not let the obstacles prevent you from knowing Jesus personally!
3. There is no need to fight alone. By accepting Jesus' call, Zacchaeus entered into a relationship with Him. Jesus came to his home, and his life changed forever. Jesus knows your pain. He knows the struggles and desires of your heart. You can do today what Zacchaeus did then. Respond to Jesus' invitation, and He will fill your life with joy and give you what money can't provide you!


 LIVE

1. Below, identify the things that you have tried to use to fill the void in your heart:

Money Addictions Work Relationships Pleasures
 Other: _____

2. Identify internal and external obstacles that prevent you from seeing Jesus:

a. external obstacles (e.g., family, work, finance, immigration)

b. internal obstacles (e.g., depression, disbelief, anger, bad temper)

3. Recognizing that you need God's help to overcome the struggles of life, ask for divine intervention. Then decide to pray daily, asking God to take control of these struggles, believing that He will give you victory.



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY FAMILY

VII



Acts 16:27–34: “The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He assumed the prisoners had escaped, so he drew his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, ‘Stop! Don’t kill yourself! We are all here!’ The jailer called for lights and ran to the dungeon and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household.’ And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household. Even at that hour of the night, the jailer cared for them and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. He brought them into his house and set a meal before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced because they all believed in God.”



1. What was the jailer about to do to himself? Acts 16:27
 2. What key question did the jailer ask Paul? Acts 16:30
 3. What influence did the jailer have about spiritual decisions in his home?
- Acts 16:31–33**

Note: Parents are responsible for Christian education at home. Here is some biblical advice about the importance of guiding children in the way of the Lord.

- a. Timothy, a young pastor, was taught by his _____ (Acts 16:1).
- b. Timothy was also supported by _____ (1 Corinthians 4:17).

Who mentors you?

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

4. How many studies did the family receive before being baptized?

Acts 16:32-33

5. As a result of their conversion, what did this family experience? **Acts 16:34**

APPLY

1. Parents must be a positive influence in the family. Although the fact that a parent is a Christian is no guarantee that their child will be one also, statistics show that if the parents are Christian, that will increase the chances that their children follow in their path. What influences did you receive from your parents? Share your answer with the group.

2. If you have children, get help everywhere you can. Timothy's mother raised her child with a spouse who was not a believer. She accepted the assistance of the apostle Paul, who took an interest in the boy and helped him spiritually. Which other people do you think can help you in raising your children? Who do you go to for parenting advice?

3. Never doubt the conversion of a person. In one night, the jailer was transformed, with his family. At first glance, it might seem as though the man had an emotional response in the midst of crisis. But, even though it is important to study the Word of God before baptism, we must be careful not to put obstacles in front of people who would like to make a decision for Jesus.

What family would you like to see in the kingdom of heaven? Write their name here:

LIVE

This week, in your personal prayer time, take a few moments to intercede for a family. Invite them next week to the small group or to eat together with you after church.



REAL HEALING



NO FEAR

VIII

REVEAL

Matthew 8:23–27: “Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, ‘Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!’ Jesus responded, ‘Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!’ Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm. The disciples were amazed. ‘Who is this man?’ they asked. ‘Even the winds and waves obey him!’ ”

EXAMINE

1. What caused the fear in the disciples? **Matthew 8:23–24**
2. Even though Jesus was with them, what did they fear would happen? **Matthew 8:25**
3. What did Jesus say they were missing, which was the real cause of their fear? **Matthew 8:26**
4. How can we increase our faith? The Bible gives us three tips:
 - a. Hear the _____ of God. **Romans 10:17**
 - b. Ask for _____. **Luke 17:5**
 - c. Put your faith to _____. **James 2:17**
5. What phrase is mentioned in the Bible more than three hundred times?
Jeremiah 1:8 _____
Daniel 10:12 _____

Revelation 2:10

APPLY

1. Faith is the key to eliminating fear. The more faith, the less fear. The greater the increase in our faith, the lower our fear. What can you do today as a Christian to have greater faith?
2. A person with fear must go to Jesus. The disciples have been criticized in this story by many preachers and Bible commentators. But they did do something good. They were afraid, they were desperate, they were worried, and so they went to Jesus. You can do that same thing today. What fears, concerns, or problems do you need to bring to Jesus today?
3. Bring your specific requests to Jesus. If you look at today's story, you see that the disciples were very specific in what they wanted Jesus to do. They wanted Him to prevent them from drowning! What are some of the things you feel you are drowning in right now?

LIVE

When problems cause you to fear, bring them to Jesus immediately. Memorize a verse today: **Deuteronomy 31:8; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 41:13; Isaiah 43:1; Isaiah 54:4; Jeremiah 1:8.**



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY FUTURE IX

REVEAL

Jeremiah 29:11: “ ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.’ ”

EXAMINE

1. What has God prophesied about our future? **Joel 2:28, 29**
2. What work does the Holy Spirit do in our lives? **Galatians 5:22–25**
3. What is the only way we can receive the fullness of the Spirit? **Acts 2:38**
4. How can we cooperate with the Holy Spirit? **Galatians 5:16–18**
 - a. We must live by the Spirit (**Galatians 5:16**). This is done by spending your day in communion with him.
 - b. We must be guided by the Spirit (**Galatians 5:18**). Before deciding anything, talk to Him.
5. How long does our transformation take? **Philippians 1:6**



APPLY

1. Your past does not determine your future. No matter what you've done, God will forgive the past, and He gives you the Holy Spirit to transform your future. What event or problem do you need to leave in the past in order to focus on your future?

Abandonment

Abuse

Divorce

Personal failings

Other _____

2. Your cooperation is important. It is God who changes, but the level of change, you get to choose. If you want little change, little will change. If you put a lot of emphasis on change and understand that it is a lifelong process, you will see more change in yourself. What needs to change immediately in you?

3. Baptism is essential for a happy future. Without baptism, the transformation cannot be complete. Perhaps you have been thinking about surrendering completely to Jesus, but you fear falling back into sin in the future. Would you like to give this fear to Jesus now and decide to be baptized soon?

LIVE

The greatest decision today is that someone in the group decides to be baptized. If someone decided that today, surround him/her and have a prayer. Do not forget to keep praying for them until the next baptism!



REAL HEALING



HEALTHY DREAMS

X

REVEAL

Joshua 14:6-12: Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea. Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

EXAMINE

1. What was the dream that Caleb had lived for, for forty-five years?
Joshua 14:12



REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

2. Was this dream something exclusive to Caleb, or had it been promised by God to all the people of Israel? **Exodus 3:8, 17; 13:5**
3. What happened to the dream of Israel? Take time to share some things that destroy our dreams. Try to remember a time in your life when your dreams were destroyed. **Joshua 14:8; Numbers 13:28, 29, 32-33**
4. Where does a person go who has lost their dreams? **Numbers 14:3**
5. What was Caleb's faith depending on, as demonstrated in the following situations? **Numbers 13:30; Joshua 14:10-12; Exodus 34:10-11**
6. What does God want to do for our dreams when we cling to His promises? What does today's story teach us about how to face the giants that seem to want to destroy our dreams? **Jeremiah 29:11-13**

APPLY

The story of the Israelites is often reflected in our lives. We have many dreams for our lives, our family, our work, but in a blink of an eye, the giants of this world can obscure our dreams. We learn some lessons from the story of Caleb that can help us to dream again:

1. It is never too late to start dreaming. Caleb dreamed for forty-five years, and at the age of eighty-five, God granted him his dreams. It may be that you are in a stage in your life when you think your dreams have disappeared, but you should never limit God in what He can do for you. In the situation where you are, God will give you the strength to start dreaming again! What dreams would you like to achieve?
2. Not all your dreams come true easily. The bigger your dreams, the greater will be your obstacles and your giants. But the bigger your giants, the greater your God. He enables us to face these giants and achieve our dreams. It all depends on our willingness to say, like Caleb: "Give me that mountain where the giants live!"
3. Our dreams are fulfilled in following the Lord. Three times we find the phrase in **Joshua 14** that Caleb "followed the Lord." God promises, "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart" (**Jeremiah 29:13, NIV**). Our success as human beings is tied to our relationship with God and our search for Him.

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

LIVE

Think about those things that are destroying your dreams. This week, ask God to transform your dreams into reality through faith in His promises. Every time you face obstacles, remember that God is bigger than your problem. May your prayer this week be, "Lord, give me that dream now that You have promised. It is true that there are strong and big problems in my life, but since You're with me, You can drive them out as You have promised."

Real Belief

“All who heard the Savior ‘were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.’ ‘He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.’ Luke 4:32, Matthew 7:29. The teaching of the scribes and elders was cold and formal. . . . To them the word of God had no vital power. Their own ideas and traditions were substituted for its teaching. . . . They professed to explain the law, but no inspiration from God stirred their own hearts or the hearts of their hearers. Jesus had nothing to do with the various subjects of dissension among the Jews. It was His work to present the truth.” —EGW



REAL BELIEF



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

I

REVEAL

1 Thessalonians 4:13–17: “Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words” (NIV)

EXAMINE

As you reread the text above, answer these questions:

1. Will the dead precede the living in going to heaven? (verse 15)
2. When will the resurrection happen? (verse 16)
3. Who will call the dead to life? (verse 16)
4. Who will rise first? (verse 16)
5. What guarantees our resurrection (verse 14)?



APPLY

How can we be hopeful in the face of death?

1. Believe in the risen Savior. The most awesome thing about death is that Jesus already defeated it! He even mocks it in **1 Corinthians 15:55** But the good news is that He wants to share that victory with us. He created us to live, and as we connect with Him, the source of life, we have life. Have you surrendered your life to Jesus? Trust your life to Him today. Whom have you lost that you would like to see again?

2. Understand death. People have many different ideas about what happens when we die. The Bible is not silent on this subject. Here are some facts: Life equals God's breath + the body (**Genesis 2:7**). Death is the reverse (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**). When we die, we die (**Ecclesiastes 9:5-6; Psalm 104:29; Psalm 146:4; Acts 2:29, 34**). The word soul is a widely misunderstood concept; it means a living being, which the Bible says will die (**Ezekiel 18:4, 20**). People who die are neither in heaven nor in hell. They are asleep. Those who die having accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior are waiting to hear the powerful voice of their Creator. What are some of the misconceptions in movies and TV about what happens when we die?

3. Wait for the Second Coming. The text says that we will enjoy heaven after the second coming of Jesus, not before (**1 Thessalonians 4:17**; see also **Luke 14:14**). Jesus comes to reward each of us according to what we have done (**Revelation 22:12**)—but no one goes to heaven ahead of the rest. We will all go together. We will enter heaven and receive life together. It will be a great reunion. Do you want to be there? Then make the best decision ever: Give your life to Jesus today! Live life as if He will come today!

LIVE

Have you lost a loved one? Maybe a friend in the barrio, a brother, a father? Are you concerned about your own future? This week, find hope in the promise of the resurrection of Jesus.



REAL BELIEF



A DAY TO RENEW, REFRESH, AND RESOLVE

II

REVEAL

Exodus 20:8-11: “Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy”

EXAMINE

1. Where is the first mention of the Sabbath in the Bible, and what are the circumstances? **Genesis 2:1-4**
2. Is there historical evidence to support the Sabbath as the seventh day of the week, i.e., Saturday?
3. God rested on the seventh day, and it was to be a _____ between Creator and creation. **Exodus 31:17**
4. Are there any real benefits when we “keep the Sabbath holy” aside from being obedient to God? **Matthew 11:28-30**
5. Jesus was crucified on the sixth day and resurrected on the first day; what did He do on the seventh day, which was consistent with the commandment in our original verse? **Matthew 28:1-7**



APPLY

1. There are three main ideas in the text above; can you write down your own impressions or understanding of God's desire for us to keep the Sabbath?

a. To remember what? _____

b. To rest how? _____

c. To restore what? _____

2. We live in a materialistic, "you are what you produce" society. Was God a little bit too optimistic by suggesting that we "take a day off from it all"?

3. God's intentions are to repair us through the Sabbath rest; what does that mean to you?

4. God has made you totally free, and the Sabbath is your chance to express and enact your freedoms:

a. Free to believe you were made by God. The way the world is set up gives us very little room to remember that our lives are a part of something bigger and far more important than what we see. When we remember the Sabbath and keep it holy, we declare our independence from this world and clearly state that God is in control of our lives.

b. Free to belong to the family of God. One of our greatest needs is to be loved and accepted. Because of the less-than-perfect lives we live, we don't often feel the love. The Sabbath is a day to remember that we belong to the family of God, in spite of ourselves. Declare your independence from past hurts and pains as you come face to face with the infinite love of God.

c. Free to become citizens of the kingdom of God. We're all looking for direction. Seems like we spend our lives looking for something that can't be found. We declare our independence from every power that binds us to this limited world, to become citizens in the Kingdom of God. We are free to worship God through eternity; free to drink from the limitless wisdom of God through eternity.

REAL

NOT ARTIFICIAL

LIVE

This week, put these three words to work every day: rest, relate, and restore. Take a physical rest from the routine of your day; relate to God through prayer, reading, listening to music, or a sermon for at least twenty minutes per day; then take time to feel renewed and restored for another ten minutes. Practice this as often as you can and begin to see the Sabbath as a whole day to rest, to relate to God, and to be restored by His love.



REAL BELIEF



JESUS CHANGES YOU FOREVER

III

REVEAL

Revelation 21:4: “ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

Isaiah 65:17: “Look! I am creating new heavens and a new earth.”

EXAMINE

1. How did God want people to live? **Genesis 1:26**
2. What interfered with the plans God had for His children? **Genesis 3:1 – 13**
3. What did God do to transform the situation? **John 3:16**
4. At what point does our transformation begin? **2 Corinthians 5:17**
5. God promises to transform our reality permanently one day. What four things does God promise to eliminate forever? **Revelation 21:4**

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____



APPLY

The way in which God transforms the human being occurs in three stages:

1. When we accept the sacrifice of Jesus, the transformation begins. Invite Him to live in your life and begin a daily relationship with Him. You are transformed into new creatures. This is known as a spiritual birth or conversion. When did you accept Jesus as your Savior? How did you feel?
2. As we walk with Christ, the transformation continues. Throughout the Christian life, spiritual transformation occurs, and you begin to see spiritual fruit such as patience, kindness, self-control, and joy. The purpose of this process is that every day we look more like Jesus. This stage is called sanctification.
3. When Jesus Christ comes the second time, He will complete the transformation. Christ promised to return to transform the reality of humanity forever. The Bible tells us, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone" (**Revelation 21:1**). **Isaiah 65:17-18** confirms this when it says, "I am creating new heavens and a new earth, and no one will even think about the old ones anymore."

LIVE

1. Identify the things you want God to transform in your life permanently:

Relationships

Character

Finance

Work

Decision making

Other: _____

2. Identify areas of your life in which you have not yet permitted God to transform you:

(family, work, finances, marriage, character, grudges, wounds)

3. Recognize the promise of God to transform your life forever, and memorize **Revelation 21:4**: "He will wipe every tear from [my eyes], and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

Have you been

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