

# FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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*A Bible Study Series*

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*Biblically Grounded*

*Theologically Sound*

*Practically Oriented*

Educational Materials from the

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Institute of Cultural, Religious,  
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## Contents

### Foreword

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### Foundations of the Christian Life: A Bible Study Series

#### **Lesson 1**

Hearing God Together — Why Scripture Matters and How It Shapes the Christian Life

#### **Lesson 2**

What Is the Gospel? — The Good News of God’s Saving Work in Christ

#### **Lesson 3**

What Is Grace? — God’s Unmerited Favor and Transforming Gift

#### **Lesson 4**

What Is Sin? — Humanity’s Rebellion and the Need for

#### **Lesson 5**

What Is Repentance? — Turning from Sin and (Re)Turning to God

#### **Lesson 6**

What Is Faith? — Trusting God and Living in Dependence on Him

#### **Lesson 7**

What Is Discipleship? — Following Christ in Faithful Obedience

#### **Lesson 8**

What Is Prayer? — Communion with God in Trust and Dependence

#### **Lesson 9**

What Is Worship? — Responding to God in Reverence and Joy

#### **Lesson 10**

What Is the Church? — The People of God Called to Worship, Community, and Mission

#### **Lesson 11**

What Is Holiness? — Set Apart for God in Heart and Life

#### **Lesson 12**

What Is Love? — The Heart of God and the Mark of Christian Life

#### **Lesson 13**

What Is God’s Will? — Living in Faithful Obedience to God

#### **Lesson 14**

What Is the Spirit’s Work? — God’s Presence, Power, and Renewal in the Christian Life

## **Lesson 15**

What Is Mission? — Living as God's Witnesses in the World

## **Lesson 16**

What Is Christian Hope? — Living in Confidence of God's Coming Renewal

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**Afterword**

**About the Author**

**More Resources**

# ICRTS — FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: A BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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## Foreword

*Foundations of the Christian Life* is a foundational Bible study series designed to help believers grow in a clear and grounded understanding of the core elements of the Christian faith. The lessons are intentionally structured to address essential questions—such as Scripture, the gospel, grace, faith, holiness, love, mission, and hope—in a way that is biblically rooted, theologically sound, and accessible to a wide range of readers.

This series is designed to be flexible in its use. It may be used as a home Bible study, a small group or Sunday School series, a church-wide Bible study, or a guided study for individuals seeking to strengthen their understanding of the Christian life. Each lesson is written to stand on its own while also fitting naturally into the larger flow of the series. Groups may move through the material sequentially or select individual lessons as needed.

The approach throughout this series is intentionally foundational rather than exhaustive. The goal is not to address every theological question or pastoral concern, but to establish a solid framework for Christian belief and practice—one that encourages careful engagement with Scripture, thoughtful discussion, and faithful application in daily life. The lessons combine brief teaching sections with Scripture readings and practical reflection, making them suitable for both guided instruction and open conversation.

This series was developed by an educator and historian with academic training in religion, theology, history, and philosophy, and with experience in church teaching and ministry, Christian education, and academic study. While informed by formal training, the material is written for the church and the home, not the classroom alone. The emphasis throughout is on Scripture, clarity, and spiritual formation.

*Foundations of the Christian Life* is offered freely through **ICRTS Publishing**, the publication sector of the **Institute of Cultural, Religious, & Theological Studies (ICRTS)** as part of its commitment to providing accessible, biblically grounded educational resources for churches, families, and individuals. It is our hope that this series will serve as a helpful guide for learning, discussion, and growth in the life of faith.

## **Lesson 1: Hearing God Together — Why Scripture Matters and How It Shapes the Christian Life**

**Scripture Readings:** Deuteronomy 6:4–7; Psalm 1:1–3; & 2 Timothy 3:14–17

### **Introduction**

The Christian life begins and grows through God’s Word. Scripture is not merely a record of ancient events or religious ideas; it is the living voice of God speaking through human authors to form His people (2 Tim. 3:16). Throughout Scripture, the people of God are repeatedly called to remember, rehearse, and respond to His Word—together in households, congregations, and communities (Deut. 6:6–7).

This lesson explores why Scripture occupies the central role in Christian discipleship. As we read and study God’s Word together, we cultivate shared convictions, strengthen one another’s faith, and learn to reflect Christ in our conduct. Scripture becomes a unifying foundation on which believers grow in wisdom and godliness.

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### **The Nature of Scripture: God Speaking to His People**

Scripture presents itself as divine speech expressed through human writers. The prophets repeatedly introduce their messages with “Thus says the LORD,” underscoring that the authority of Scripture comes from God Himself (Jer. 1:9). The New Testament affirms this truth, teaching that “men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21).

Because Scripture is God’s Word, it is living and active (Heb. 4:12). It reveals God’s character, His redemptive work, His promises, and His purposes for His people. It also shapes the inner life—renewing the mind, forming the heart, correcting error, and guiding righteous action (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

The Bible is therefore not passive information but formative truth. It speaks with divine authority and equips believers for every facet of the Christian life.

### **Scripture in the Community of Faith**

Scripture is meant to be received and lived out within the fellowship of God’s people. In Deuteronomy, the commands of God are to be rehearsed continually within the home—spoken, taught, and remembered in daily life (Deut. 6:7). The New Testament continues this pattern, emphasizing how faith is nurtured through generational testimony and communal engagement. Timothy, for example, learned the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother, grounding his faith from childhood (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14–15).

The early church likewise devoted itself to the apostles’ teaching as a gathered community (Acts 2:42). When believers study Scripture together, they encourage one another, share wisdom, strengthen unity, and develop a common understanding of God’s truth. The communal study of Scripture forms a people who walk together in obedience and fidelity to Christ.

## **How Scripture Forms the Christian Life**

Scripture forms believers in at least three essential dimensions:

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

The Word clarifies truth, guards against error, and grounds our faith in God’s promises and character. Believers are called to be “rooted and built up in Him” (Col. 2:6–7), which requires a firm grasp of biblical teaching.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Through Scripture the Spirit cultivates Christlike character. God uses His Word to renew minds, sanctify hearts, and produce spiritual fruit (Rom. 12:2; Gal. 5:22–23). The Christian life is formed from the inside out.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Scripture gives wisdom for daily decisions, relationships, speech, and behavior. It is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Ps. 119:105), training believers to walk in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:17).

These three dimensions—beliefs, character, and actions—comprise the heart of Christian discipleship.

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## **Practical Matters: Putting Scripture into Practice**

A healthy pattern of Bible study moves from hearing to doing (James 1:22). As an exercise for the week, participants may reflect on today’s passages through a simple rhythm:

- **One Verse** to carry into the week
- **One Thought** about why Scripture matters
- **One Prayer** asking God to shape the heart through His Word

This practice helps internalize biblical truth and encourages ongoing spiritual growth between gatherings. As believers commit themselves to Scripture, God uses His Word to guide choices, cultivate unity, and deepen faith.

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## **Conclusion**

Scripture stands at the center of Christian life because it is the means through which God reveals Himself and forms His people. Studying the Bible together strengthens faith, shapes character, and unifies believers in the pursuit of Christlike living.

As we begin this study of the foundations of the Christian life, may God use His Word to deepen our understanding, sharpen our convictions, and transform us into His likeness.

## **Lesson 2: What Is the Gospel? — The Good News of God’s Saving Work in Christ**

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 52:7; Mark 1:14–15; Romans 1:16–17; 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

### **Introduction**

The gospel stands at the center of the Christian faith. It is the announcement—the “good news”—that God has acted decisively through Jesus Christ to save sinners, restore creation, and establish His kingdom. Scripture presents the gospel not as abstract ideas but as God’s gracious intervention in history, calling all people to faith, repentance, and new life (Mark 1:14–15).

Understanding the gospel is foundational for discipleship. When believers grasp the meaning of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, they gain clarity about identity, purpose, and hope. The gospel is not only the beginning of the Christian life; it is the message that sustains and shapes believers daily (Rom. 1:16–17). This lesson considers what Scripture teaches about the gospel and how its truth forms the Christian life.

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### **The Gospel Announced: God’s Good News to the World**

In Scripture, the word “gospel” means “good news,” a term used in the Old Testament for the joyful announcement of God’s victory and salvation (Isa. 52:7). Jesus uses this same language at the outset of His ministry, proclaiming the “gospel of God” and calling people to repent and believe (Mark 1:14–15). The gospel is therefore God’s declaration—the announcement that His redeeming work has arrived.

The gospel proclaims that God has acted through His Son to defeat sin, conquer death, and open the way to reconciliation with Himself. Rooted in historical events, centered on Jesus Christ, and grounded in Scripture’s promises, the gospel is the supreme expression of God’s grace, inviting all people to receive forgiveness and eternal life through faith.

### **The Gospel Defined: Christ’s Saving Work**

Paul summarizes the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day, all in accordance with the Scriptures. These events are the heart of God’s saving action. Christ’s death satisfies the demands of justice, and His resurrection reveals God’s victory over death and His power to create new life.

Paul further teaches that the gospel is “the power of God for salvation” (Rom. 1:16). This means the gospel does not merely inform—it transforms. Believers receive forgiveness, reconciliation, and renewal. The gospel changes status (from guilty to justified), relationship (from enemies to children), and direction (from sin to holiness). It is both the announcement of what God has done and the invitation to enter the life Christ gives.

### **How the Gospel Forms the Christian Life**

The gospel shapes believers in three essential dimensions:

## **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

The gospel establishes the central truths of the faith: humanity’s sin, God’s holiness, Christ’s atoning death, His resurrection, and salvation by grace through faith. These convictions anchor Christian identity and shape a biblical worldview.

## **2. Character — Who We Become**

Through the gospel, believers are united to Christ and indwelt by the Spirit. This union transforms the heart—putting off the old life and walking in the new (Rom. 6:4). Gratitude for grace and the Spirit’s work produce Christlike character (Gal. 5:22–23).

## **3. Conduct — How We Live**

The gospel calls believers to live in a way that reflects the grace they have received: forgiving others, practicing compassion, pursuing justice, and sharing the message of salvation. As God has loved us in Christ, we are called to love others.

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### **Practical Matters: Putting the Gospel into Practice**

The gospel invites a daily response. Christians are called to live in light of God’s saving work by trusting Christ, turning from sin, and walking in obedience (James 1:22). Regular reflection strengthens faith and deepens assurance.

As a weekly exercise, participants may consider:

- **One Truth** from today’s passages that clarifies the gospel
- **One Area** where the gospel calls for renewed obedience or repentance
- **One Prayer** thanking God for His grace and asking for a heart shaped by Christ’s love

Through consistent reflection, the gospel becomes not only a message remembered but a transforming power experienced in everyday life.

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### **Conclusion**

The gospel is the heartbeat of the Christian faith—the announcement of God’s redeeming work in Christ. It is the message that saves, sustains, and shapes His people. When believers understand the gospel, they see the depth of God’s love, the seriousness of sin, and the greatness of Christ’s victory.

As we continue this series on the foundations of the Christian life, may the truth of the gospel lead us into deeper faith, fuller obedience, and greater gratitude for the grace given through God’s Son.

### **Lesson 3: What Is Grace? — God’s Unmerited Favor and Transforming Power**

**Scripture Readings:** Exodus 34:6; John 1:14–17; Romans 3:21–24; Romans 5:1–11; Ephesians 2:4–9; Titus 2:11–14

#### **Introduction**

Grace is one of the most profound and beautiful truths in the Christian faith. Scripture describes grace as God’s unmerited favor—His free and generous kindness given to sinners who cannot earn His acceptance. Grace is the foundation of salvation, the source of spiritual strength, and the power that transforms believers into the image of Christ (Eph. 2:8–9).

This lesson explores what grace is, how God reveals it in Christ, and why grace is essential for both salvation and daily Christian living. Understanding grace protects believers from self-reliance and fills them with gratitude for God’s steadfast love.

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#### **The Meaning of Grace: God’s Unmerited Favor**

Grace begins with God’s character. When God reveals His name to Moses, He declares Himself “merciful and gracious” (Exod. 34:6). Grace is not an abstract idea but the outflow of God’s compassion toward the undeserving. In Scripture, grace means that God acts for our good not because of our merit, but because of His love. Paul teaches that believers “are justified by His grace as a gift” (Rom. 3:24). Grace rescues sinners, forgives guilt, restores fellowship, and provides what human effort never could. Grace therefore humbles us. It reminds us that salvation is not achieved through works, morality, or religious effort, but through God’s generous kindness poured out in Christ.

#### **The Gift of Grace in Christ: Salvation Through God’s Initiative**

Grace is most clearly revealed in Jesus Christ. John writes, “Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). Christ’s life, death, and resurrection demonstrate God’s initiative in redeeming sinners. Paul describes humanity as spiritually dead, yet God—“rich in mercy”—made us alive with Christ (Eph. 2:4–5). Salvation is entirely God’s work. By grace we are saved through faith, not by works, “so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9). Through grace, sinners receive forgiveness, adoption, peace with God, and reconciliation (Rom. 5:1–11). Grace assures believers that their standing with God rests on Christ’s finished work, not their performance.

#### **The Power of Grace: Training Believers for Godliness**

Grace not only saves—it transforms. Scripture teaches that “the grace of God... trains us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions” (Titus 2:11–12). Grace empowers obedience, fuels repentance, strengthens perseverance, and shapes the believer’s desires according to God’s will. This means grace is never a license for sin. Instead, grace frees the believer from sin’s dominion and enables a life marked by holiness, gratitude, and love. The same grace that forgives also renews, teaching believers to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives as they await Christ’s return (Titus 2:13–14).

## **How Grace Forms the Christian Life**

Grace reshapes the believer's convictions, character, and conduct—establishing a life anchored in God's mercy and sustained by His power.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Grace clarifies essential truths: humanity's inability to save itself, God's initiative in redemption, and Christ's sufficiency. These convictions guard believers from pride, despair, and legalism, grounding faith in God's faithfulness rather than human effort.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Grace cultivates humility, gratitude, and compassion. It forms a heart that depends on God, welcomes correction, and delights in His transforming work. The Spirit uses grace to renew the inner person and shape Christlike virtues.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Grace teaches believers to obey with joy, not compulsion. It leads to forgiveness, generosity, patience, and perseverance. When believers grasp the depth of God's grace, they extend that same grace to others and live in a manner worthy of the gospel.

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## **Practical Matters: Living in the Strength of Grace**

Grace calls believers to rest in God's kindness and rely on His power. Daily habits of confession, Scripture meditation, and prayer help believers remember their dependence on God. Fellowship with other Christians strengthens accountability and encourages perseverance.

As an exercise this week, consider:

- **One Truth** from today's passages that deepens your understanding of grace
- **One Way** you can rely on God's grace rather than your own strength
- **One Prayer** thanking God for His unearned mercy and asking for His transforming power

Practicing these rhythms helps believers grow in confidence rooted not in themselves, but in the God who graciously sustains them.

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## **Conclusion**

Grace is the heart of the Christian life. It reveals God's generous love, secures salvation through Christ, and empowers believers to live in obedience and hope. To understand grace is to understand God's initiative and our dependence on His mercy. As we continue this series, may a deeper grasp of grace strengthen our faith, humble our hearts, and draw us closer to the God who saves and transforms by His unmerited favor.

## **Lesson 4: What Is Sin? — Humanity’s Rebellion and the Need for Redemption**

**Scripture Readings:** Genesis 3:1–13; Psalm 51:1–4; Isaiah 59:1–2; Romans 3:9–12, 23; 1 John 1:8–10

### **Introduction**

To understand the Christian life, one must understand the reality of sin. Scripture presents sin not merely as mistakes or moral failures, but as humanity’s rebellion against God and the corruption of our nature. Sin explains why the world is broken, why humanity needs redemption, and why the gospel is good news (Rom. 3:23). Without a biblical view of sin, salvation loses its meaning.

This lesson examines the nature, effects, and universality of sin and why this understanding is essential for Christian faith. Recognizing our need enables us to appreciate the greatness of God’s grace and the transforming power of Christ’s redeeming work.

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### **The Nature of Sin: Rebellion Against God**

Scripture describes sin as a violation of God’s will and a rupture of relationship with Him. Adam and Eve’s disobedience shows that sin begins with distrusting God’s word and seeking autonomy from His authority (Gen. 3:1–6). Sin is therefore relational—turning from God toward self-rule.

The Bible defines sin as “lawlessness” (1 John 3:4), revealing that it opposes God’s righteous commands. Whether expressed in outward actions or inward desires, sin contradicts God’s character and creates separation between God and humanity (Isa. 59:2). Sin is both a condition of the heart and an action or behavior of disobedience.

### **The Effects of Sin: Corruption and Consequence**

Sin affects every part of life. After the fall, humanity became spiritually dead, morally corrupted, and unable to save itself (Eph. 2:1–3). Scripture affirms that “none is righteous” and “no one does good” (Rom. 3:9–12; Ps. 14:3). Sin distorts desires, blinds understanding, and enslaves the will (John 8:34).

The consequences of sin include guilt, shame, brokenness, and death (Rom. 6:23). Sin damages relationships, disrupts communities, and burdens creation itself (Rom. 8:20–21). Above all, sin alienates people from God and leaves them unable to reconcile themselves apart from His grace.

### **The Universality of Sin: All Have Fallen Short**

Sin is universal. David declares that he was “brought forth in iniquity” (Ps. 51:5), and Paul teaches that Adam’s disobedience brought condemnation to all (Rom. 5:12, 18). Every person needs salvation, not only those who commit particularly visible sins.

Scripture warns that denying sin is self-deception: “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves” (1 John 1:8). Recognizing our fallen condition fosters humility and dependence on God. Awareness of sin enlarges our understanding of grace and prepares us to receive Christ’s mercy.

## **How Understanding Sin Forms the Christian Life**

Understanding sin reshapes the believer’s convictions, character, and conduct. A right view of sin clarifies our need and leads to genuine discipleship.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

A biblical understanding of sin reinforces essential truths: God’s holiness, humanity’s fallenness, the certainty of judgment, and the necessity of divine grace. These convictions protect believers from shallow views of wrongdoing and ground salvation in Christ alone.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Recognizing sin cultivates humility and repentance. It leads to self-examination and a desire for inner transformation. The Spirit uses this awareness to form Christlike character—producing patience, purity, gentleness, and integrity (Gal. 5:22–23).

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

A right view of sin shapes daily behavior. Believers become more watchful against temptation, intentional in pursuing holiness, and compassionate toward others. It also encourages accountability, confession, forgiveness, and restoration within the Christian community.

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## **Practical Matters: Putting an Understanding of Sin into Practice**

Understanding sin leads to genuine self-examination and dependence on God’s grace. Believers are called to confess sin honestly (1 John 1:9), resist temptation, and rely on the Spirit’s transforming work. Scripture helps reveal areas where sin still exerts influence.

As an exercise this week, consider:

- **One Truth** from today’s passages that clarifies the nature of sin
- **One Area** where sin needs to be confessed or resisted
- **One Prayer** asking for cleansing, strength, and a renewed desire for righteousness

Such reflection keeps believers humble, dependent, and receptive to God’s renewing grace.

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## **Conclusion**

Sin is humanity’s deepest problem—rooted in rebellion, universal in scope, and destructive in consequence. Yet Scripture never speaks of sin apart from the hope of redemption. A right understanding of sin prepares the heart to receive Christ’s mercy and magnifies the grace revealed in the gospel. As we continue this series, may a clearer view of sin deepen our gratitude for God’s grace and draw us closer to the One who forgives, restores, and transforms His people.

## **Lesson 5: What Is Repentance? — Turning from Sin and (Re)Turning to God**

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 55:6–7; Ezekiel 18:30–32; Matthew 4:17; Acts 2:37–38; 2 Corinthians 7:9–10; 1 John 1:8–9

### **Introduction**

Repentance is essential to the Christian life. Scripture presents it not merely as regret or moral correction but as a decisive turning—from sin and back toward God. This twofold movement renounces rebellion and returns the heart to God’s mercy and truth (Isa. 55:7).

Repentance is both the beginning of the Christian journey and its ongoing rhythm. Because sin still affects the believer, repentance remains necessary for spiritual growth and renewed obedience. This lesson explores the meaning of repentance and how turning from sin and *returning* to God shapes Christian discipleship.

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### **The Meaning of Repentance: Turning the Heart Back to God**

Biblical repentance involves a deliberate turning of mind, heart, and direction. Throughout Scripture, God calls His people to “turn back” from sin and return to Him (Ezek. 18:30–32). Jesus continues this call, announcing the kingdom and urging people to repent (Matt. 4:17).

Repentance includes both **renouncing sin** and **returning to God**. It begins with seeing sin truthfully and continues with a sincere reorientation of life toward Him. This inward return produces outward change and renewed obedience.

### **Genuine Repentance: Godly Sorrow and a New Direction**

Scripture distinguishes worldly sorrow from godly sorrow. Worldly sorrow regrets consequences; godly sorrow grieves sin because it offends God (2 Cor. 7:9–10). True repentance produces humility, confession, and a new direction in life.

Repentance is also rooted in God’s compassion. The one who returns to the Lord finds abundant pardon (Isa. 55:7). Turning from sin is sustained not by fear but by trust—confidence that God receives and restores those who return to Him.

### **The Fruits of Repentance: Evidence of a Returned Heart**

Repentance begins inwardly but produces visible fruit. Scripture speaks of “fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matt. 3:8), showing that a heart returned to God leads to transformed living.

Repentance strengthens fellowship with God and others. Confession restores communion with God (1 John 1:9) and fosters humility, forgiveness, and reconciliation within the church. Through ongoing repentance, believers keep returning to the path of righteousness.

## **How Repentance Forms the Christian Life**

Repentance shapes convictions, character, and conduct, teaching believers to turn from sin and continually return to God.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Repentance reinforces core truths: the seriousness of sin, the holiness of God, the need for grace, and the call to obedience. These convictions ground repentance in the gospel, reminding believers that returning to God is possible only through Christ.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Repentance cultivates humility and spiritual sensitivity. As believers acknowledge sin and return to God, the Spirit shapes Christlike character—purifying motives, softening the heart, and strengthening the desire to obey.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Repentance transforms daily behavior. It leads believers to forsake sinful habits, seek accountability, repair relationships, and walk faithfully with God. A repentant life is one continually returning to God's truth and grace.

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## **Practical Matters: Putting Repentance into Practice**

Repentance is a continual practice shaped by Scripture, prayer, and the Spirit's prompting. Believers confess sin (1 John 1:9), resist temptation, and intentionally reorient their hearts toward God. Regular reflection helps identify areas needing renewal.

As an exercise this week, consider:

- **One Truth** from today's passages that deepens your view of repentance
- **One Area** where a turning or returning to God is needed
- **One Prayer** asking for a repentant heart and strength to walk in obedience

Such practices nurture spiritual growth and keep believers aligned with God's will.

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## **Conclusion**

Repentance is a vital part of Christian life—a turning from sin and a returning to God through faith in His mercy. Rooted in God's compassion and empowered by the Spirit, repentance restores fellowship, shapes character, and redirects daily conduct.

As we continue this series, may repentance remain a gracious invitation—leading us to renewal, obedience, and deeper love for the God who forgives, restores, and transforms His people.

## **Lesson 6: What Is Faith? — Trusting in God and Living by His Promises**

**Scripture Readings:** Genesis 15:1–6; Habakkuk 2:4; John 20:30–31; Romans 4:18–25; Hebrews 11:1–6

### **Introduction**

Faith stands at the heart of the Christian life. Scripture describes faith not as vague optimism or blind belief, but as confident trust in God’s character, promises, and redeeming work. By faith, sinners receive salvation, walk in obedience, and persevere through trials. Faith is both the response to God’s grace and the foundation of a life lived in fellowship with Him (Hab. 2:4).

This lesson explores what the Bible teaches about faith—its meaning, its object, and its role in shaping Christian discipleship. Understanding faith helps believers grow in confidence, obedience, and dependence on God’s unwavering promises.

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### **The Nature of Faith: Trust Rooted in God’s Word**

Biblical faith begins with God’s revelation. Abraham believed the promise God spoke to him, and “it was counted to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6). Faith rests not on human insight but on God’s trustworthy word.

Faith involves knowledge, assent, and trust. Believers must know God’s truth, agree with it, and personally rely upon it. This reliance is the essence of faith—entrusting oneself to God and staking one’s life on His promises. Faith is therefore relational, grounded in the character of the God who speaks truthfully and acts faithfully.

### **Saving Faith: Receiving God’s Gift in Christ**

Scripture teaches that salvation comes through faith alone. Believers are justified—declared righteous—when they trust in the finished work of Christ (Rom. 4:23–25). Saving faith relies on Christ’s atoning death and victorious resurrection, not on human merit or effort.

Saving faith also unites the believer to Christ. Through faith, we receive forgiveness, new life, and the indwelling of the Spirit. Faith is not merely the beginning of salvation; it continues as the means by which believers walk with Christ, drawing strength and hope from His grace.

### **Faith in Daily Life: Confidence, Obedience, and Perseverance**

Faith is active. The book of Hebrews describes faith as “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). This confidence enables believers to obey God even when circumstances are uncertain.

Faith also strengthens perseverance. From Abel to Abraham to Moses, the faithful endured trials, trusted God’s promises, and lived for a future they could not yet see. Genuine faith looks beyond present challenges to the God who remains faithful through every season.

## **How Faith Forms the Christian Life**

Faith shapes the believer's convictions, character, and conduct, directing the entire Christian life toward God and His promises.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Faith affirms core truths of Scripture: the trustworthiness of God, the reliability of His word, the sufficiency of Christ, and the certainty of His promises. These convictions become the foundation of Christian doctrine and hope.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Faith forms Christlike character by cultivating humility, dependence, and hope. Through faith, the Spirit strengthens inner resolve, purifies motives, and anchors the believer's identity in God's grace rather than in personal performance.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Faith expresses itself through obedience. Believers trust God's wisdom, follow His commands, and shape their decisions around His promises. Faith also produces love, generosity, courage, and patience—virtues that reflect the life of Christ.

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## **Practical Matters: Putting Faith into Practice**

Faith grows through the means God provides. Scripture deepens understanding, prayer strengthens dependence, and the fellowship of believers encourages perseverance. Trials also refine faith, teaching believers to rely on God rather than on their own strength (James 1:2–4).

As an exercise this week, consider:

- **One Truth** from today's readings that strengthens your trust in God
- **One Area** where God is calling you to step forward in faith
- **One Prayer** asking for deeper confidence in God's promises and guidance

Practices like these help faith mature and shape the rhythms of daily discipleship.

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## **Conclusion**

Faith is the lifeblood of Christian living—trust in the God who speaks, saves, and sustains. Through faith, believers receive salvation, walk in obedience, and persevere with hope. Faith is both God's gift and the believer's response, leading to a life anchored in His truth and promises.

As we continue this series, may God strengthen our faith, deepen our trust in Christ, and shape our lives according to His unfailing word.

## **Lesson 7: What Is Discipleship? — Following Christ in Daily Life**

**Scripture Readings:** Matthew 4:18–22; Matthew 11:28–30; Matthew 16:24–26; John 8:31–32; John 15:1–11; Luke 9:23; Colossians 2:6–7

### **Introduction**

Jesus' call to "Follow Me" lies at the center of the Christian life (Matt. 4:19). Discipleship is not a special task for pastors or spiritually mature believers—it is the calling of every Christian. Scripture defines discipleship as responding to Jesus' invitation, learning from Him, and allowing His teaching to shape the whole of life.

Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment. It requires trusting Christ, obeying His word, and being formed into His likeness. This lesson explores what it means to follow Jesus, why discipleship matters, and how Christ shapes His people through daily fellowship with Him.

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### **The Life of Discipleship: Learning, Obeying, and Abiding**

Jesus teaches that true disciples continue in His word (John 8:31). Discipleship therefore involves learning Christ's teachings and allowing Scripture to shape beliefs, decisions, and desires.

Obedience is also essential. Jesus says that to follow Him, one must "deny himself and take up his cross daily" (Luke 9:23). This means surrendering competing loyalties, resisting sin, and choosing Christ's way over one's own.

Discipleship also involves abiding—remaining in Christ through prayer, Scripture, and fellowship. Jesus describes this as abiding in the vine so that believers may bear fruit (John 15:4–5). The life of discipleship is a continual, daily walk with Christ that grows deeper over time.

### **The Shape of Discipleship: Transformation into Christlikeness**

Discipleship leads to transformation. As believers walk with Christ, the Spirit renews their minds, directs their steps, and forms them into Christ's image. Learning from Jesus shapes the heart, aligns desires with God's will, and produces a life marked by love, humility, and service.

Discipleship also involves community. Jesus formed disciples in relationship with one another, and the church continues this pattern through encouragement, accountability, and shared devotion (Acts 2:42–47). Together, believers grow in maturity and contribute to Christ's mission in the world.

### **How Discipleship Forms the Christian Life**

Discipleship reshapes convictions, forms character, and directs conduct as believers learn to follow Jesus in every part of life.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Discipleship deepens biblical convictions. As believers learn from Christ's word, they grow in understanding God's truth, discernment, and wisdom. These convictions anchor faith and guide decision-making.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Discipleship forms Christlike character—humility, patience, courage, love, and endurance. Through daily obedience and the Spirit's work, disciples grow toward spiritual maturity.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Discipleship shapes actions. Believers learn to serve others, resist sin, practice forgiveness, and embody Christ's commands in daily life. Conduct becomes a living testimony of the grace that transforms.

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### **Practical Matters: Walking with Jesus Daily**

Discipleship grows through intentional practices: reading Scripture, praying regularly, participating in Christian community, and seeking opportunities to obey Christ in everyday decisions. Even small steps of faith can lead to deep spiritual growth.

This week, consider:

- **One Teaching** of Jesus you want to learn or obey more fully
- **One Practice** that encourages daily fellowship with Christ
- **One Prayer** asking God to deepen your desire to follow Jesus faithfully

These habits help believers walk closely with Christ and cultivate a life shaped by His presence.

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### **Conclusion**

Discipleship is a lifelong journey of following Jesus, learning His ways, and being transformed by His grace. It calls believers to trust Christ, obey His word, and remain in His love. Through discipleship, God shapes His people into the likeness of His Son and equips them for faithful living.

As we continue in this series, may our hearts grow eager to follow Jesus more closely and live out the calling He places before all who trust in Him: "Follow Me."

## **Lesson 8: What Is Prayer? — Communing with God in Trust and Dependence**

**Scripture Readings:** Psalm 63:1–8; Matthew 6:5–13; Luke 11:1–4; Philippians 4:4–7; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

### **Introduction**

Prayer is one of the most central practices of the Christian life. Scripture presents prayer not merely as a religious duty but as the gracious gift of communion with God. Through prayer, believers express dependence, seek God’s guidance, confess sins, and grow in fellowship with the Father who hears and cares (Phil. 4:6).

Prayer is both simple and profound. It is the heartfelt cry of the believer and the lifelong discipline of those who walk with Christ. This lesson explores what prayer is, why it matters, and how communion with God shapes the life of faith.

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### **The Nature of Prayer: Fellowship with the Living God**

Prayer is personal communication with God—an expression of trust, reverence, and relationship. The psalmist cries out to God as his refuge and portion, revealing that prayer flows from a heart seeking God’s presence (Ps. 63:1–3). Jesus teaches His disciples to pray to God as “Our Father,” showing that prayer is grounded in intimacy and confidence (Matt. 6:9).

Prayer includes praise, confession, thanksgiving, and petition. It brings our needs before God but also reorients our hearts toward His will. True prayer aligns the believer with the character and purposes of God, shaping desires according to His truth and grace.

### **The Model of Prayer: Learning from Jesus**

When the disciples asked Jesus, “Teach us to pray,” He responded with a pattern that guides the heart and content of Christian prayer (Luke 11:1–4). The Lord’s Prayer begins with worship—honoring God’s name and seeking His kingdom—before turning to daily needs, forgiveness, and spiritual protection.

Jesus’ model shows that prayer is both God-centered and life-oriented. It directs the believer first to God’s reign and righteousness, then to the concerns of everyday life. Prayer therefore becomes a means of surrender, dependence, and ongoing formation in Christlikeness.

### **The Practice of Prayer: Perseverance, Humility, and Joy**

Scripture calls believers to pray continually (1 Thess. 5:17). This command shapes prayer as a continual posture of the heart, not simply an occasional activity. Through regular prayer, believers bring anxieties to God, experience His peace (Phil. 4:6–7), and learn to trust Him in every circumstance.

Prayer also requires humility. Jesus warns against praying to be seen by others and instead invites His followers to seek the Father in secret (Matt. 6:5–6). True prayer is sincere, dependent, and anchored in the confidence that God delights to hear His children.

## **How Prayer Forms the Christian Life**

Prayer shapes the believer's convictions, character, and conduct. It forms spiritual maturity by cultivating a life lived before God.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Prayer reinforces foundational truths: God is sovereign, caring, present, and attentive. It affirms that He hears His people and responds according to His wisdom. These convictions strengthen faith and anchor the believer in God's trustworthy care.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Prayer forms Christlike character by cultivating humility, patience, gratitude, and perseverance. Through prayer, the Spirit softens the heart, aligns desires with God's will, and deepens love for Him. Regular communion with God shapes the believer from the inside out.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Prayer influences daily decisions and actions. It produces peace amid worry, clarity amid confusion, and strength amid temptation. Prayer also fuels obedience, compassion, and service, enabling believers to love God and others with sincerity.

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## **Practical Matters: Putting Prayer into Practice**

Prayer grows through intentional practice. Setting aside daily times for prayer, meditating on Scripture, and praying with others strengthens spiritual focus and dependence on God. Short, continual prayers throughout the day keep the heart oriented toward God's presence and guidance.

As an exercise this week, consider:

- **One Truth** from today's passages that deepens your understanding of prayer
- **One Discipline** you can adopt to strengthen your prayer life
- **One Prayer** asking God to draw you into deeper fellowship through daily communion

Such habits nurture a life of prayerful reliance on God.

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## **Conclusion**

Prayer is God's gracious invitation to commune with Him in trust and dependence. Through prayer, believers worship, confess, seek, and grow. Prayer shapes convictions, forms character, and directs daily conduct toward God's will.

As we continue in this series, may prayer become both our refuge and our strength—drawing us closer to the God who listens, guides, and transforms His people.

## **Lesson 9: What Is Worship? — Responding to God with Reverence, Joy, and Obedience**

**Scripture Readings:** Psalm 95:1–7; Psalm 100:1–5; John 4:23–24; Romans 12:1–2; Hebrews 10:19–25; Revelation 4:8–11

### **Introduction**

Worship is one of the central expressions of the Christian life. Scripture describes worship as the wholehearted response of God’s people to His greatness, His goodness, and His saving work. Worship is more than singing—it is honoring God with our words, actions, desires, and daily obedience (Rom. 12:1).

Worship shapes the believer’s heart by lifting the eyes toward God’s glory and grounding life in His presence. This lesson explores what worship is, why it matters, and how believers respond to God with reverence, joy, and obedience.

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### **The Meaning of Worship: Honoring God for Who He Is**

Worship begins with recognizing who God is. The psalmist calls God’s people to praise Him because “the Lord is a great God” and “we are the people of His pasture” (Ps. 95:3, 7). Worship is therefore rooted in God’s character—His holiness, power, mercy, and faithfulness.

Jesus teaches that true worshipers worship the Father “in spirit and truth” (John 4:23–24). Worship is sincere, heartfelt, and grounded in God’s revelation. It is not confined to a place or ritual but flows from a heart that treasures God above all else. Worship directs our attention to God’s worth and invites us to respond with adoration and awe.

### **The Practice of Worship: Gathering, Praising, and Devoting Ourselves to God**

Worship includes both personal and corporate expressions. Individually, believers praise God through prayer, Scripture reading, thanksgiving, and daily obedience. Corporately, the church gathers to sing, pray, confess, hear the Word, celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and encourage one another in faith (Heb. 10:24–25).

Worship is also sacrificial. Paul urges believers to present their bodies as a “living sacrifice,” calling this “spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1). This means worship is not limited to Sunday—it is the offering of one’s entire life to God. Every choice becomes an act of devotion when it is done for His glory.

### **The Goal of Worship: Encountering God and Being Transformed**

Worship leads to transformation. When believers behold the glory of God, the Spirit renews their minds and shapes them into Christ’s likeness (Rom. 12:2). Worship lifts the heart from earthly distractions and reorients desires toward God’s will.

Worship also strengthens perseverance. Gazing on God’s majesty, as pictured in the heavenly worship of Revelation 4, fills believers with hope and courage. True worship does not end with the service—it sends believers back into daily life with renewed faith, gratitude, and purpose.

## **How Worship Forms the Christian Life**

Worship shapes convictions, character, and conduct as believers respond to God’s grace and glory.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Worship reinforces biblical truth: God is holy, sovereign, and worthy of all praise. It deepens our understanding of Scripture, shapes our worldview, and strengthens our faith in God’s promises.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Worship humbles the heart, cultivates gratitude, and nurtures joy. By drawing near to God, believers experience renewal, repentance, and spiritual growth, becoming more like Christ.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Worship spills into everyday actions—serving others, resisting sin, and seeking to honor God in work, relationships, and decisions. A life of worship displays God’s goodness through integrity, compassion, and love.

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## **Practical Matters: Cultivating a Life of Worship**

Worship deepens through regular practices. Setting aside time each day for prayer and Scripture, participating faithfully in corporate worship, singing with gratitude, and reflecting on God’s character strengthen a life of devotion. Worship also grows when believers intentionally look for ways to honor God in ordinary tasks.

This week, consider:

- **One Truth** about God that inspires your worship
- **One Practice** that helps you draw near to God daily
- **One Prayer** offering yourself to God as an act of worship

Such habits shape a life that continually responds to God with praise and obedience.

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## **Conclusion**

Worship is the joyful and reverent response of God’s people to His greatness and grace. It anchors the heart in God’s truth, renews the believer’s spirit, and shapes daily life according to His will.

As we continue this series, may our worship deepen—both in the gathered church and in the quiet moments of daily life—so that our entire lives reflect the glory of the God who is worthy of all praise.

## **Lesson 10: What Is the Church? — The People of God Called to Worship, Community, and Mission**

**Scripture Readings:** Matthew 16:13–18; Acts 2:42–47; Ephesians 2:19–22; Ephesians 4:1–6, 11–16; 1 Peter 2:9–10; Hebrews 10:23–25; 1 Corinthians 12:12–13

### **Introduction**

The church is central to God’s work in the world. Scripture describes it not as a building or event, but as the people of God—redeemed by Christ and united through the Spirit. The church gathers for worship, grows through fellowship and discipleship, and is sent to witness to God’s saving grace. Understanding the church’s nature and purpose helps believers recognize their place in God’s family and their calling as part of Christ’s body. This lesson considers who the church is, what it does, and how belonging to it shapes Christian life.

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### **The Identity of the Church: God’s Redeemed People**

Jesus promised to build His church, declaring that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The church is Christ’s creation—purchased by His blood, built upon His word, and held together by His Spirit. Scripture describes the church as a spiritual household, with believers as fellow citizens and members of God’s family (Eph. 2:19). Peter identifies the church as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession” (1 Pet. 2:9). These titles originally belonged to Israel under the Old Covenant (Ex. 19:5–6), but through Christ, Gentile believers are now included in the people of God (Eph. 2:11–3:6; 1 Cor. 12:12–13). These images emphasize identity: the church belongs to God, lives under His rule, and displays His glory. To be part of the church is to be called into a redeemed community set apart for God’s purposes.

### **The Life of the Church: Worship, Fellowship, and Formation**

From the earliest days, the church devoted itself to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). These practices reflect the core rhythms of the church’s life.

**Worship** unites the church around God’s presence and truth.

**Fellowship** strengthens believers through mutual encouragement, accountability, and shared life.

**Teaching and discipleship** ground believers in Scripture, helping them grow toward maturity in Christ.

Although the church is a spiritual household, it is also expressed visibly in the gathered assembly of believers. Scripture urges Christians not to neglect meeting together but to encourage one another through regular fellowship (Heb. 10:24–25). The church’s life is therefore both spiritual and embodied—God’s people gathering to worship, learn, pray, and persevere in faith. Christ also gives particular gifts to individuals—apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers—to equip the saints and build up His body (Eph. 4:11–12), strengthening unity and maturity in love and truth.

## **The Mission of the Church: Witness, Service, and Love**

The church does not exist for itself. Jesus sends His people into the world as witnesses of His gospel (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8). The church proclaims salvation, demonstrates Christ’s love through mercy, righteousness, and service, and lives as a sign of God’s kingdom. Its mission includes evangelism—sharing the good news—and discipleship—training believers to follow Christ. It also involves compassion, justice, and reconciliation, revealing God’s heart for the world. As the church lives out this mission, it becomes a visible expression of God’s grace and invites others to the hope found in Christ.

## **How the Church Forms the Christian Life**

Belonging to the church shapes convictions, character, and conduct.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

The church teaches the truth of Scripture, guards the gospel, and forms believers in sound doctrine. Through preaching and study, believers grow in understanding and discernment.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Life in the church forms humility, patience, and love. Through community, believers learn to forgive, bear burdens, and grow in Christlike maturity.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

The church equips believers to serve others, resist sin, pursue holiness, and practice generosity. Conduct shaped by the church reflects the unity and compassion Christ calls His people to embody.

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## **Practical Matters: Living as Part of Christ’s Body**

Believers grow when they commit to regular participation in the life of the church. Worshiping faithfully, building relationships, serving others, and learning under the ministry of God’s word cultivate spiritual maturity.

This week, consider:

- **One Way** you can invest more deeply in the life of the church
- **One Relationship** within the church you can strengthen or encourage
- **One Prayer** asking God to help you live faithfully as part of His people

Such practices remind us that Christian growth happens not in isolation, but in community.

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## **Conclusion**

The church is special. May we embrace the privilege of belonging to Christ’s body and live out this calling with joy, unity, and devotion to God’s purposes.

## **Lesson 11: What Is Holiness? — God’s Character and the Call to Be Set Apart**

**Scripture Readings:** Leviticus 19:1–2; Isaiah 6:1–7; Romans 6:19–23; 1 Peter 1:13–16; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8

### **Introduction**

Holiness stands at the heart of the Christian life. Scripture presents holiness first as a defining attribute of God and, second, as the calling of His people. To be holy is not merely to avoid wrongdoing, but to be set apart for God—shaped by His character, devoted to His purposes, and transformed by His grace (1 Pet. 1:15–16).

Understanding holiness helps believers grasp both who God is and who they are called to become in Christ. This lesson explores the meaning of holiness, its grounding in God’s nature, and how the call to holiness shapes Christian faith and daily living.

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### **The Holiness of God: God Set Apart in Glory and Purity**

Holiness belongs first and foremost to God. When Isaiah sees the Lord exalted in the temple, the seraphim cry, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:3). God’s holiness expresses His absolute purity, moral perfection, and utter uniqueness. He is wholly other—set apart from all that is created and corrupted by sin.

God’s holiness also expresses His utter uniqueness as the source of all life and goodness. Like the sun—life-giving yet overwhelming if approached without protection—God’s holy presence is both beautiful and dangerous to sinful humanity, not because it is evil, but because it is perfectly good (Isa. 6:1–5; Exod. 3:5–6).

God’s holiness exposes human sinfulness. Isaiah responds not with confidence, but with confession, recognizing his unclean state before a holy God (Isa. 6:5). Scripture consistently shows that God’s holiness reveals both His majesty and humanity’s need for cleansing and redemption.

### **The Call to Holiness: Set Apart as God’s People**

Because God is holy, His people are called to be holy. The Lord commanded Israel, “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2). Under the New Covenant, this call is extended to all believers through Christ (1 Pet. 1:15–16). Holiness is not optional; it is integral to belonging to God.

This calling does not mean separation from the world, but distinction within it. Christians are set apart in identity, values, and conduct. Holiness reflects allegiance to God rather than conformity to sinful patterns. Through Christ, believers are consecrated for God’s purposes and empowered to live differently (Rom. 6:22).

### **Holiness in the Christian Life: Freedom from Sin and Devotion to God**

Holiness involves both turning away from sin and being devoted to righteousness. Paul teaches that believers are freed from slavery to sin and now live as “slaves to righteousness” leading to sanctification (Rom. 6:19–23). Holiness is therefore not restriction but freedom—the freedom to live as God intends.

Under the New Covenant, God’s holiness no longer merely repels impurity but transforms it. In Christ, holiness moves outward—purifying, restoring, and bringing life—so that believers are not destroyed by

God's presence but renewed and sent as living temples through whom His holy life flows into the world (John 7:37–39; 1 Cor. 6:19).

Scripture connects holiness with obedience, self-control, and purity. God's will for His people is their sanctification, particularly in how they live, love, and treat others (1 Thess. 4:3–7). Holiness expresses itself through faithful choices shaped by love for God and reverence for His name.

### **How Holiness Forms the Christian Life**

Holiness shapes convictions, character, and conduct as believers are conformed to God's will.

#### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Holiness deepens convictions about God's nature, sin's seriousness, and the necessity of grace. Believers learn that holiness flows from God's character and is made possible through Christ, not human effort alone.

#### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Holiness forms Christlike character—producing humility, integrity, reverence, and purity of heart. As believers grow in holiness, their desires increasingly align with God's will and reflect His goodness.

#### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Holiness shapes daily conduct. Believers pursue righteousness, resist sin, and seek to honor God in thought, word, and action. Holy living becomes a visible testimony to God's transforming work.

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### **Practical Matters: Pursing a Holy Life**

Holiness grows through intentional practices shaped by God's grace. Regular engagement with Scripture, prayer, confession, and accountability help believers walk faithfully. Fellowship within the church encourages perseverance and correction.

This week, consider:

- **One Attribute** of God's holiness that stands out from today's readings
- **One Area** where God is calling you to greater faithfulness
- **One Prayer** asking God to shape your life according to His holiness

Such practices help believers pursue holiness not out of fear, but out of love and devotion to God.

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### **Conclusion**

Holiness reflects God's character and defines the calling of His people. Set apart by grace and empowered by Christ, believers are invited to live lives marked by devotion, purity, and righteousness.

As we continue this series, may a deeper understanding of holiness draw us closer to God and shape lives that honor His holy name.

## **Lesson 12: What Is Love? — The Heart of God and the Mark of Christian Life**

**Scripture Readings:** Deuteronomy 6:4–5; Matthew 22:34–40; John 13:34–35; Romans 5:6–8; 1 Corinthians 13:1–13; 1 John 4:7–12

### **Introduction**

Love stands at the center of the Christian faith. Scripture teaches that love is not merely an emotion or moral ideal, but the very expression of God’s nature and the defining mark of those who belong to Him. To know God is to know love, because “God is love” (1 John 4:8).

Understanding biblical love helps believers grasp both God’s character and their calling. This lesson explores what love is, how God reveals love in Christ, and why love shapes every aspect of Christian belief and practice.

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### **The Source of Love: God’s Nature and Initiative**

Love originates in God Himself. Scripture declares that God’s love precedes human response and is grounded in His character, not our worthiness. God demonstrates His love by sending His Son to redeem sinners while they were still hostile to Him (Rom. 5:6–8).

God’s love is not only morally perfect but life-giving and faithful—an expression of His commitment to sustain, redeem, and restore His creation according to His promises (Deut. 7:7–9; Rom. 5:8). This love is covenantal and self-giving, flowing from who God is rather than what humanity deserves.

Because love flows from God, it cannot be separated from truth, holiness, or obedience. Biblical love reflects God’s character and purposes.

### **The Meaning of Love: Sacrifice, Commitment, and Faithfulness**

Jesus identifies love as the greatest commandment—loving God and loving others (Matt. 22:37–40). This love is not rooted in sentiment but in commitment. Jesus defines love by His own actions: laying down His life for others (John 15:13).

Paul describes love as patient, kind, enduring, and selfless (1 Cor. 13:4–7). Biblical love seeks the good of others, resists selfish ambition, and perseveres even in difficulty. Biblical love is therefore not defined by emotion alone, but by a committed choice to seek the good of others, even at personal cost, following the pattern revealed in Christ (John 15:12–13).

Christian love is active. It moves beyond words into deeds shaped by faithfulness, humility, forgiveness, and obedience to God’s will.

### **Love in the Christian Life: The Visible Mark of Discipleship**

Jesus teaches that love is the distinguishing mark of His followers: “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). Love reflects the transforming work of God’s grace and the presence of the Spirit within believers.

When love governs the life of the Christian community, it becomes a visible testimony to God's presence, making His character tangible through faithful relationships and self-giving service. Love binds the church together, strengthens unity, and enables believers to bear one another's burdens (1 John 4:11–12). Where love is practiced, God's presence is made visible, and His character is reflected through His people.

### **How Love Forms the Christian Life**

Love shapes convictions, character, and conduct, guiding believers in faithful living.

#### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Love clarifies core Christian truths: God's initiative in salvation, the value of every person, and the unity of God's people. Scripture teaches that love for God and love for others are inseparable, revealing that devotion to God is always expressed through faithful love toward people (Matt. 22:37–40; 1 John 4:20).

#### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Love forms Christlike character. As believers grow in love, they develop patience, humility, gentleness, and endurance. Love reshapes desires and aligns the heart with God's compassion.

#### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Love directs daily actions. It motivates forgiveness, service, generosity, and reconciliation. A life shaped by love reflects Christ's example and bears witness to the gospel.

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### **Practical Matters: Living a Life of Love**

Love grows through intentional practice. Prayer, reflection on Christ's sacrifice, and engagement in Christian community help believers cultivate love. Acts of service and kindness train the heart to love as God loves.

This week, consider:

- **One Way** God's love has been shown to you
- **One Relationship** where you can reflect Christ's love more intentionally
- **One Prayer** asking God to deepen your love for Him and others

Such practices help believers live out the love that God has first shown them.

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### **Conclusion**

Love reveals the heart of God and defines the life of His people. Rooted in God's grace and expressed through faithful action, love stands at the center of Christian belief and practice. May our understanding of love deepen, shaping lives that reflect God's compassion, truth, and self-giving grace.

### **Lesson 13: What Is God’s Will? — Living in Faithful Obedience to God**

**Scripture Readings:** Micah 6:6–8; Matthew 7:21; Romans 12:1–2; Ephesians 5:15–17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

#### **Introduction**

Many Christians ask, “What is God’s will for my life?” Scripture answers this question not primarily by offering a hidden blueprint, but by revealing God’s will through His character, commands, and purposes. God’s will is not mysterious or inaccessible—it is revealed in Scripture and lived out through faithful obedience shaped by love.

Understanding God’s will helps believers move from uncertainty to discernment. This lesson explores how Scripture defines God’s will, how believers are called to live within it, and how obedience to God’s will shapes the Christian life.

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#### **The Will of God Revealed: God’s Character and Commands**

God’s will flows from who He is. Scripture reveals God’s will through His moral purposes—what He desires His people to believe, love, and practice. The prophet Micah summarizes God’s will as doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God (Mic. 6:8).

Jesus teaches that knowing God’s will involves obedience, not merely profession. “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven,” He says, “but the one who does the will of my Father” (Matt. 7:21). God’s will is therefore relational and ethical, calling believers to live in alignment with His truth and holiness.

#### **The Will of God in Daily Life: Discernment and Obedience**

Scripture calls believers to discern God’s will through transformed thinking. Paul urges Christians to present their lives to God and to be renewed in mind so that they may “discern what is the will of God” (Rom. 12:1–2). God’s will is not discovered apart from transformation; it is recognized through a life shaped by devotion and obedience.

God’s will also addresses everyday conduct. Believers are called to live wisely, making the most of their time and understanding what pleases the Lord (Eph. 5:15–17). God’s will is not limited to major decisions—it shapes speech, relationships, purity, gratitude, and perseverance in ordinary life (1 Thess. 4:3; 5:18).

#### **Freedom and Trust in God’s Will**

Living within God’s will is not a burden but a gift. Scripture presents obedience as the path to life, wisdom, and peace. God’s commands are given not to restrict joy, but to guide believers into faithful and flourishing lives (Ps. 19:7–11).

Trust is essential. Believers often face uncertainty, but Scripture assures them that God is faithful and purposeful. Walking in God’s will involves trusting His wisdom, submitting desires to Him, and relying

on His guidance through prayer and Scripture. Faithful obedience becomes an act of love and confidence in God's goodness.

### **How God's Will Forms the Christian Life**

God's will shapes convictions, character, and conduct as believers learn to live faithfully before Him.

#### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Understanding God's will clarifies that obedience flows from relationship, not legalism. Believers affirm that God's will is good, wise, and loving, rooted in His character and revealed through Scripture.

#### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Living according to God's will forms humility, patience, and trust. As believers submit to God's purposes, the Spirit shapes their desires and aligns their hearts with God's truth.

#### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

God's will directs daily choices. Believers pursue righteousness, resist sin, practice gratitude, and seek to honor God in every area of life. Obedience becomes a joyful response to God's grace.

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### **Practical Matters: Seeking and Walking in God's Will**

Believers grow in discernment through regular engagement with Scripture, prayer, and reflection. Wise counsel from mature believers and faithful participation in the church also aid in understanding God's will.

This week, consider:

- **One Command** of Scripture that clarifies God's will for your life
- **One Area** where obedience requires trust and surrender
- **One Prayer** asking God for wisdom and a willing heart

Such practices help believers walk confidently in God's will.

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### **Conclusion**

God's will is not hidden from those who seek Him in faith. Revealed through Scripture and lived out in obedience, God's will calls believers to walk in love, holiness, and trust.

As we continue this series, may our desire be not merely to know God's will, but to live faithfully within it—confident in His wisdom and goodness.

## **Lesson 14: What Is the Spirit’s Work? — God’s Presence, Power, and Renewal in the Christian Life**

**Scripture Readings:** John 14:15–17, 26; John 16:7–15; Romans 8:1–17; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Galatians 5:16–25; Titus 3:4–7

### **Introduction**

The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in the Christian life. Scripture presents the Spirit not as an impersonal force, but as God’s personal presence dwelling within believers. Through the Spirit, God applies the work of Christ, transforms the heart, and empowers faithful living.

Understanding the Spirit’s work helps believers grasp how God is actively involved in their daily lives. This lesson explores who the Holy Spirit is, what He does, and how His work shapes the believer’s faith, growth, and obedience.

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### **The Spirit’s Presence: God Dwelling with His People**

Jesus promised that the Spirit would come as Helper and Advocate, dwelling with and within His followers (John 14:16–17). The Spirit’s presence marks believers as belonging to God and assures them of their adoption as God’s children (Rom. 8:15–16).

Scripture teaches that believers are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). God no longer dwells in a physical sanctuary alone, but in the hearts of His people. The Spirit’s indwelling presence brings comfort, conviction, and confidence in God’s nearness.

### **The Spirit’s Transforming Work: Renewal and Sanctification**

The Holy Spirit works to renew the believer’s inner life. Through the Spirit, believers are freed from condemnation and empowered to live according to God’s will (Rom. 8:1–4). This transforming work involves sanctification—the means by which believers are conformed to the image of Christ.

The Spirit shapes character by producing spiritual fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23). As believers walk by the Spirit, sinful desires lose their power and new patterns of righteousness take root. Sanctification is not self-produced; it is the Spirit’s gracious work within a willing heart.

### **The Spirit’s Guidance and Power: Leading Believers in Truth**

Jesus taught that the Spirit would guide believers into truth and remind them of His teachings (John 16:13). The Spirit illuminates Scripture, convicts of sin, and directs believers toward obedience and wisdom. Guidance is not about predicting the future, but about forming discernment and faithfulness.

The Spirit also empowers believers for service. Through the Spirit’s power, Christians are equipped to witness, endure trials, and serve others faithfully. The Spirit strengthens the church and prepares believers to participate in God’s mission with courage and clarity.

## **How the Holy Spirit Forms the Christian Life**

The Spirit shapes convictions, character, and conduct, sustaining the believer's walk with God.

### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

The Spirit confirms God's truth, testifies to Christ, and assures believers of salvation. Through the Spirit, believers grow in confidence that God is at work within them.

### **2. Character — Who We Become**

The Spirit transforms character by cultivating Christlike virtues. Over time, believers reflect God's holiness and love as the Spirit reshapes desires and attitudes.

### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

The Spirit empowers obedience. Believers learn to resist sin, practice righteousness, and live according to God's will through reliance on the Spirit's strength rather than their own.

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## **Practical Matters: Walking by the Spirit**

Walking by the Spirit requires attentiveness and trust. Regular prayer, Scripture meditation, and obedience help believers remain responsive to the Spirit's leading. Fellowship with other believers encourages discernment and perseverance.

This week, consider:

- **One Evidence** of the Spirit's work in your life
- **One Area** where you need the Spirit's guidance or strength
- **One Prayer** asking God to deepen your dependence on the Spirit

Such practices help believers live in step with God's transforming presence.

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## **Conclusion**

The Holy Spirit is God's active presence in the life of the believer—renewing hearts, guiding in truth, and empowering faithful living. Through the Spirit, God applies the work of Christ and shapes His people into His likeness.

As we continue this series, may we learn to walk by the Spirit, trusting His work to sustain, transform, and lead us in obedience and hope.

## **Lesson 15: What Is Mission? — Living as God’s Witnesses in the World**

**Scripture Readings:** Genesis 12:1–3; Matthew 28:18–20; John 20:21–22; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; 1 Peter 2:9–12

### **Introduction**

Mission is not an optional activity added to the Christian life; it flows directly from God’s redemptive purposes. Scripture reveals that God is a sending God, calling His people to bear witness to His truth, grace, and kingdom in the world. From the beginning, God’s plan has been to bless the nations through His people (Gen. 12:3).

Understanding mission helps believers see their lives as part of God’s larger story. This lesson explores the biblical foundation of mission, the calling of every believer to participate in it, and how mission shapes Christian faith and practice.

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### **The Mission of God: God’s Redemptive Purpose for the World**

Mission begins with God. Throughout Scripture, God reveals His desire to redeem, restore, and reconcile humanity to Himself. The promise given to Abraham—that all nations would be blessed through him—points forward to God’s global redemptive plan fulfilled in Christ (Gen. 12:1–3).

Jesus embodies this mission. Sent by the Father, He proclaims the kingdom of God, heals the broken, forgives sinners, and offers reconciliation. After His resurrection, Jesus commissions His followers to continue this mission, declaring that all authority belongs to Him (Matt. 28:18–20). Christian mission therefore flows from God’s initiative and authority, not human ambition.

### **The Call to Mission: Sent as Witnesses of Christ**

Jesus sends His followers just as the Father sent Him: “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21). This calling applies to all believers, not only to those who travel far or hold specific roles. Every Christian is a witness—called to testify to Christ through word and life.

The Spirit empowers this calling. Jesus promises that believers will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them and that they will be His witnesses “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Mission is therefore inseparable from the Spirit’s work, as God equips His people to speak, serve, and live faithfully in the world.

### **The Shape of Christian Mission: Proclamation and Presence**

Christian mission involves both proclamation and presence. Believers are called to share the gospel clearly—announcing the good news of reconciliation through Christ (2 Cor. 5:18–20). This message invites repentance, faith, and new life in Christ.

Mission also takes shape through faithful presence. As God’s people live out their faith, they display God’s character through love, humility, righteousness, and good works (1 Pet. 2:12). The church

becomes a visible expression of God's kingdom, showing the world what life under Christ's reign looks like. Word and deed work together in faithful witness.

### **How Mission Forms the Christian Life**

Mission shapes convictions, character, and conduct, orienting believers outward in love and obedience.

#### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Mission reinforces the truth that God desires all people to know Him. Believers affirm the uniqueness of Christ, the urgency of the gospel, and God's purpose to reconcile the world to Himself.

#### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Mission forms humility, courage, compassion, and perseverance. As believers engage the world, they learn to rely on God's strength and reflect Christ's self-giving love.

#### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Mission shapes daily choices. Believers seek opportunities to serve, speak truth graciously, practice hospitality, and live in a way that honors Christ. Everyday faithfulness becomes a powerful witness.

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### **Practical Matters: Living Missionally**

Mission begins where believers are. Faithful witness grows through prayer, attentiveness to others, and readiness to speak about Christ with wisdom and love. Participation in the church's mission strengthens accountability and shared purpose.

This week, consider:

- **One Person** you can pray for as a witness to Christ
- **One Opportunity** to show Christ's love through service or encouragement
- **One Prayer** asking God for courage and faithfulness in mission

Such practices help believers live as sent people in everyday life.

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### **Conclusion**

Mission flows from God's heart and defines the calling of His people. Sent by Christ and empowered by the Spirit, believers are invited to participate in God's work of reconciliation and restoration.

As we continue this series, may we embrace our identity as God's witnesses—living faithfully, loving generously, and proclaiming the hope found in Christ.

## **Lesson 16: What Is Christian Hope? — Living in Confidence of God’s Coming Renewal**

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 65:17–25; Romans 8:18–25; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28, 50–58; Titus 2:11–14; Revelation 21:1–5

### **Introduction**

Hope is essential to the Christian life. Scripture presents hope not as wishful thinking or uncertain optimism, but as confident trust in God’s promises and purposes. Christian hope looks forward to what God has promised to complete, grounding present faith and perseverance in the assurance of future renewal (Rom. 8:24–25).

Understanding Christian hope helps believers endure suffering, resist despair, and live faithfully in the present. This lesson explores the nature of Christian hope, its foundation in Christ’s resurrection, and how hope shapes the believer’s life as they await God’s final restoration.

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### **The Foundation of Christian Hope: God’s Promises Fulfilled in Christ**

Christian hope is rooted in God’s faithfulness. Throughout Scripture, God promises renewal, restoration, and the defeat of sin and death. These promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, whose resurrection stands as the decisive guarantee of what is yet to come (1 Cor. 15:20).

The resurrection assures believers that death is not the end and that God’s redemptive purposes will prevail. Because Christ has been raised, believers live with the confidence that God’s promises will be fulfilled—not partially, but fully. Christian hope is therefore grounded not in circumstances, but in the character and power of God.

### **The Shape of Christian Hope: Renewal, Resurrection, and Restoration**

Christian hope is future-oriented but deeply connected to the present. Scripture speaks of a coming renewal in which God will make all things new—restoring creation, healing what is broken, and dwelling with His people forever (Rev. 21:1–5).

Hope includes the resurrection of the body, the defeat of death, and the full realization of God’s kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50–57). This hope affirms the goodness of creation and the promise of its redemption. Believers do not escape the world; they await its renewal according to God’s purposes.

### **Living in Hope: Perseverance, Faithfulness, and Joy**

Christian hope shapes how believers live now. Paul teaches that present suffering is not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed (Rom. 8:18). Hope sustains perseverance, giving believers strength to endure hardship and remain faithful amid trials.

Hope also produces joy and courage. Because the future is secure in Christ, believers are free to live generously, sacrificially, and boldly. Christian hope anchors the soul, keeping faith steady and love active as believers await the fulfillment of God’s promises.

### **How Forms the Christian Life**

Hope shapes convictions, character, and conduct, orienting believers toward God's future.

#### **1. Convictions — What We Believe**

Christian hope affirms that God is faithful, death is defeated, and redemption is certain. Believers trust that God's promises will come to completion according to His word.

#### **2. Character — Who We Become**

Hope forms endurance, patience, and resilience. As believers live in anticipation of God's future, their hearts are strengthened to remain faithful and hopeful in the present.

#### **3. Conduct — How We Live**

Hope motivates holiness, service, and perseverance. Believers live responsibly and purposefully, knowing their labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).

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### **Practical Matters: Living as People of Hope**

Christian hope grows through regular engagement with Scripture, prayer, and worship. Remembering God's promises and reflecting on Christ's resurrection strengthen confidence and perspective. Fellowship with other believers also encourages hope by reminding us of God's faithfulness.

This week, consider:

- **One Promise** of God that strengthens your hope
- **One Area** where hope gives you courage to persevere
- **One Prayer** thanking God for the future He has promised

Such practices help believers live faithfully between Christ's resurrection and the final renewal of all things.

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### **Conclusion**

Christian hope is confident expectation grounded in God's promises and secured through Christ's resurrection. It sustains faith, fuels perseverance, and shapes faithful living in the present.

As this series concludes, may our hope remain firmly anchored in God's promise to make all things new—and may that hope guide our lives with confidence, faithfulness, and joy.

## Afterword

Completing a study like *Foundations of the Christian Life* is not an end in itself, but an invitation to continue growing in faith, understanding, and obedience. The Christian life is not built through a single series or season of study, but through a lifelong journey of learning, repentance, trust, and faithful living before God.

The themes explored in these lessons—Scripture, the gospel, grace, faith, holiness, love, the Spirit’s work, mission, and hope—are not abstract ideas to be mastered, but realities to be lived. They shape how believers worship, pray, serve, love others, endure hardship, and participate in the life of the church. Growth in the Christian life comes as these truths move from the page into daily practice.

Readers and groups are encouraged to return to Scripture often, to remain rooted in the life of the church, and to continue asking thoughtful questions as faith matures. This series is meant to provide a foundation, not a finish line—a framework upon which deeper study, discipleship, and service can be built.

Above all, the Christian life is lived in response to God’s grace in Christ. As believers walk forward, may their faith be strengthened, their love deepened, and their hope anchored in the promise that God is faithful and that He is at work renewing all things.

## About the Author

Alex R. Jaramillo is the Founder and Director of the **Institute of Cultural, Religious, & Theological Studies (ICRTS)**, where he serves as an educational content creator and instructor. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in History with a focus on American religious and cultural history.

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